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BEHAVIOUR AND MENTAL STATES

A THESIS

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by

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled Behaviour and Mental States, submitted by Richard J. Mouw in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I discuss some possible alternatives to scepticism concerning the mental states of others. I try to show that some arguments which have been recently presented as refutations, or dissolutions, of the sceptical arguments are, at best, inconclusive. I contend that in order to successfully deal with the problem any argument that poses as an alternative to scepticism must adequately fulfill two requirements: (1) it must allow for the fact that we can be mistaken about the mental states of others for reasons other than that we missed some relevant observable activity; and (2) it must demonstrate that, although we can often be wrong about the mental states of others, we could not always, or normally, be wrong. Finally, I try to show, briefly, that these requirements appear to be satisfied in Wittgenstein's remarks on the problems involved in ascertaining the mental states of others.

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor John Utzinger, under whose guidance I first came to grips with the basic problems of this thesis; and to Professors Hubert Schwyzer and Colwyn Williamson, who introduced me to the philosophy of Wittgenstein.

My interpretation of Wittgenstein and my criticisms of some of his interpreters have been much influenced by my reading of an unpublished dissertation, "The Claim to Rationality: Knowledge and the Basis of Morality", by Stanley Cavell. This influence is most apparent in parts of Chapters II, IV and V.

My greatest debt is to Professor Schwyzer who, as my Supervisor, has been a constant source of encouragement and helpful criticism.

I am not sure that any of the above, however, would agree with all, or even part, of my position as it is developed in this thesis.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Some philosophers in recent years have put forward the view that one individual can, without any special difficulties, ascertain the mental states of another individual. While this suggestion may seem, to the philosophically uninitiated, to be unworthy of more than a passing nod of puzzled agreement, to one who is aware of the epistemological developments in philosophy from Descartes onward, so bold a proposal will merit examination. It is my purpose in this thesis to conduct such an examination.

The problem to be discussed has come to be known as "the problem of other minds"; this problem has emerged, during the past hundred or so years, as one distinct from the more general problem under which it had been for a long time subsumed, "the problem of the external world". We shall not pursue this problem in all the directions of philosophical inquiry in which it might conceivably lead us. The present discussion shall be limited to a particular question which, in a sense, is symptomatic of a whole range of philosophical problems, viz., can one person ever know with certainty that another person is experiencing a particular mental state?

That the answer to this question was obviously a negative one had come to be taken for granted by the end of the nineteenth century. Not long after the turn of this century, however, G.E. Moore suddenly reversed the trend by making it fashionable to doubt whether one could (sensibly) have consistent doubts about the mental states of others. Moore's second-order doubt has been shared, with varying degrees of passion and for a variety of reasons, by many contemporary philosophers. The

result has been that a number of different kinds of arguments have been presented for the express purpose of refuting, or "dissolving", the sceptical, near-solipsistic doubts of the Cartesian epistemological tradition. I propose to examine some representative arguments of this kind.

A. THE CASE FOR SCEPTICISM.

Before considering the recent attacks on the philosophical past, it is necessary first of all to outline the sceptic's case, so that we may be clear about what it is that is being attacked. For purposes of simplicity I shall try to limit my discussion, throughout the thesis, to examples having to do with pain.

The considerations which have led some traditional philosophers to doubt whether one could ever be certain about another person's pains have been expressed in arguments similar to the one which follows:¹ "I occasionally have a toothache; about this I can have no doubts. When I have a toothache I know I have one because I can feel it. I am also led to think that other persons occasionally have toothaches. I even think that I can tell when another person has a toothache because I can observe him doing certain kinds of things which are similar to the kinds of things that I do when I have a toothache; for instance: groaning, grimacing, holding his jaw, and saying, 'I have a toothache'.

1. For a detailed statement of the argument for solipsism, of which the following argument would be a first step, see the Introduction to The Philosophy of Mind, ed. V.C. Chappell (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1962), pp.2-6. I have found Chappell's discussion of solipsism and his survey of the various recent attempts to counter the solipsist argument to have been very helpful outline of the problems involved.

The only troublesome factor is that I can pretend to have a toothache when I do not really have one - and I can put on a pretty convincing performance! If I want to deceive another person for some reason all I have to do is to go through all of the same motions which I go through when I really do have a toothache. However, I cannot deceive myself in this way; but I could, given enough ingenuity, always deceive anyone else. On the other hand, if I have a toothache and I do not want anyone else to know about it, I can successfully keep it to myself: I just have to refrain from pacing the floor, groaning, grimacing, holding my jaw, and talking about my pain, and no one else will ever know. Similarly, other persons can keep me from finding out about their toothaches by also refraining from behaving in a manner which would give the impression that they are in pain. And they can also deceive me into thinking that they do have a toothache by doing all of these things even though they are not in pain.

In the case of pretending to have a toothache, in order to deceive others, one does exactly the same things one would do if one really had a toothache. So, if another person does those things which we think of as constituting 'toothache-behaviour', one cannot be certain whether he really has a toothache or whether he is successfully pretending to have a toothache - the very same observable behaviour would be present in both cases. Therefore, to wince, groan, hold one's jaw, and say 'I have a toothache' is not the same as having a toothache. At best, the two - behaviour and toothache - often accompany each other; but the presence of one does not necessarily imply the existence of the other. There is, then, no opportunity for a valid inference from propositions about outward behaviour to propositions about pains. The only way in which I could ever be certain about

another person's toothache would be if I could somehow 'feel' his toothache - which, of course, is impossible."

The above argument, which if pushed further can lead to solipsism, should be sufficient for an understanding of just why someone might say, "I can never know whether another person really has a toothache." It is only necessary to add that, following this argument further, we would also refrain from identifying the toothache with the abscess of the tooth, or the quickening of the pulse - both of which could be detected by proper dental and medical instruments and could be present in an unconscious person. A toothache, we must conclude, is something very "private", hidden of necessity from others.

Scepticism, in its weakest (and most popular) form, has emphasised the "merely contingent" relation between observed behaviour and private pains. It has at best entertained the hope of finding that such behaviour can serve as "signs" ("evidence", "indications") of the private mental states of other persons. That behaviour can so serve is the essential claim of the so-called "argument from analogy"; John Stuart Mill states the argument as follows:

I conclude that other human beings have feelings like me, because, first, they have bodies like me, which I know, in my own case, to be the antecedent condition of feelings; and because, secondly, they exhibit the acts, and other outward signs, which in my own case I know by experience to be caused by feelings.²

2. J.S. Mill, An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1889), p.243

This argument cannot rule out, for Mill, the possibility that other persons are in fact "automatons", or even consistent deceivers; one finally has to just choose to "believe them to be alive", thereby bringing "other human beings, as phenomena, under the same generalizations which I know by experience to be the true theory of my own existence."³

B. THE ANTI - SCEPTICAL RESPONSE.

As has been already mentioned, there has been in recent years a reaction to the kind of scepticism outlined above. This reaction, or at least that aspect of it from which I shall choose my examples, has taken place among those British and American philosophers who are generally associated with the movement which has come to be called "ordinary language philosophy" or, more appropriately, "analytic philosophy". Recent anti-scepticism, which has been concerned to deny the sceptical conclusion that we can never know with certainty that another person is experiencing a particular mental state, has been chiefly characterised by a rejection of the notion that the relation between behaviour and mental states is a "merely contingent" one.

The general spirit, if not the letter, of the recent wave of anti-scepticism is well expressed in Gilbert Ryle's The Concept of Mind. Here Ryle attacks what he calls "the dogma of the Ghost in the Machine"; his attack is carried out with force and eloquence, albeit an occasional bluntness. The following is a typical Rylean declaration:

No metaphysical Iron Curtain exists compelling us to be for ever absolute strangers to one another, though ordinary circumstances,

3. Ibid., p.244.

together with some deliberate management, serve to maintain a reasonable aloofness. Similarly no metaphysical looking-glass exists compelling us to be for ever completely disclosed and explained to ourselves, though from the everyday conduct of our sociable and unsociable lives we learn to be reasonably conversant with ourselves.⁴

Ryle attacks Cartesian body-mind dualism with such vigor that one cannot help but suspect that he will be able to find no other alternative for himself than to adopt some form of behaviourism. And he has been accused of doing just that. Such accusations do not seem to be without some justification, either; for example, Ryle says that "overt intelligent performances are not clues to the working of minds; they are those workings" (emphasis mine)⁵. However, Ryle could with good reason insist that his reference to "overt intelligent performances" rescues him from at least a simple behaviourist position.

By "behaviourism" I mean the reduction of the mental to the physical, or the denial that statements that are usually taken to be about "mental" events are anything more than statements about physical, overt behaviour. (My suggestion above that Ryle can escape being labelled as a simple behaviourist rests on the assumption that he would insist that there is a difference between "overt behaviour" and what he calls "overt intelligent performances".) It is an attempt, then, to eliminate all notions of a hidden, necessarily private, "ghostly" something from the meaning of words such as "pain", "understanding", "hoping", etc. Along

4. Gilbert Ryle, The Concept of Mind (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1949), p.181.

5. Ibid., p.58.

the lines of crude behaviourism, "He has a toothache" can be completely "unpacked" into statements about overt (i.e. in principle observable) behaviour, such as "He is holding his jaw", "He is groaning", etc. A straightforward, bold reduction of this kind is difficult to find in the recent literature. A.J. Ayer, in his Language, Truth and Logic had gone part-way toward such a reduction in his defence of the theory often referred to as the "two-meanings view." There Ayer argued that assertions about one's own pains referred to private sensations, but that assertions about the pains of other persons could be nothing more than statements about their observable behaviour.

Just as I must define material things and my own self in terms of their empirical manifestations, so I must define other people in terms of their empirical manifestations - that is, in terms of the behaviour of their bodies, and ultimately in terms of sense-contents. The assumption that "behind" these sense-contents there are entities which are not even in principle accessible to my observation can have no more significance for me than the admittedly metaphysical assumption that such entities "underlie" the sense-contents which constitute material things for me, or my own self. And thus I find that I have as good a reason to believe in the existence of other people as I have to believe in the existence of material things. For in each case my hypothesis is verified by the occurrence in my sense-history of the appropriate series of sense-contents..... The distinction between a conscious man and an unconscious machine resolves itself into a distinction between different types of perceptible behaviour. The only ground I can have for asserting that an object which appears to be a conscious being is not really a conscious being, but only a dummy or a machine, is that it fails to satisfy one of the empirical tests by which the presence or absence of consciousness is determined..... When I assert that an object is conscious I am asserting no more than that it would, in response to

any conceivable test, exhibit the empirical manifestations of consciousness.⁶

If Ayer were to extend this analysis of third-person consciousness-statements also to first-person statements we would have a pure-behaviourism. The argument would be that any statement about any so-called "mental" act can be unpacked into statements about observable behaviour. This view, when applied to first person statements of, say, pain, is very difficult to defend; for it implies that when one says "I have toothache" one is describing one's overt behaviour, i.e. one is saying, "I am groaning, I am grimacing, I am holding my jaw."

A behaviourist account of first-person statements of, say, pain would not seem to do justice to our awareness of our own pains. Most of us do not have to observe our own behaviour before we are capable of saying, "I am in pain." But it is also difficult to accept such an account as an analysis of third-person pain statements. If what is being suggested is that pains are nothing more than groans, grimaces and jaw-holdings, then such a theory appears to be unconcerned with the facts of life. But Ayer seems to be arguing for something more than a crude behaviourism; he says that the subject to whom we are attributing a particular mental state is experiencing that state if it would continue to manifest the behaviour "in response to any conceivable test." Presumably, then, we would have "a good reason" to say that John has a toothache if we could say that John is grimacing, groaning and holding his jaw and also that if John were given an opportunity to play golf, go to the movies, attend the church of his choice, etc. he would decline. Thus, to say that John has a real toothache is to

6. A.J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic (New York: Dover, 1946), p.130.

say that John is exhibiting certain behaviour and would continue to do so in certain specified situations; to say that John is only pretending to have a toothache is to say that John is exhibiting certain behaviour but would not continue to do so in certain specified situations.

What this analysis does not allow for is the difference between a real toothache and a successfully pretended toothache. It would seem that the "behaviour" and the "response to any conceivable test" would be exactly the same in both situations. A successful pretence would be, among other things, a pretence which would stand up against any conceivable test. I do not see how the above account could explain this difference. But these problems will be raised again in the subsequent discussion.

What follows in this thesis is an examination of some (but not all) attempts to find an alternative to scepticism. We have already briefly considered one such attempt:

- 1) that there is no real difference between mental states and physical behaviour; i.e. that our talk about mental states is, in effect, talk about physical behaviour - or more specifically, that statements about mental states can be completely "unpacked" into statements about physical behaviour.

This view has seldom been advocated in any straightforward or consistent way. We shall examine the views of philosophers who, while hoping to answer scepticism about other minds, are also concerned to avoid simple behaviourism. Roughly, their views fluctuate between two more sophisticated variations on (1) above:

- 2) that statements about mental states cannot be completely "unpacked" into statements about physical behaviour, but that the relation between them is of such a kind that, given a list of true statements about

physical behaviour, it will follow that a statement about a mental state is also true.

- 3) that the relation between statements about mental states and statements about physical behaviour is neither a "merely contingent" one, nor is it a "necessary" one; rather the relation is such that, if one can say (correctly) that certain behaviour is present, then one is "justified in saying", one can be "almost certain", that a particular mental state is also present.

My discussion shall move along the following lines. I will, first of all, discuss some examples of the views outlined above. I hope to show that none of the three responses to scepticism, or any variations on them, provides us with an adequate alternative to scepticism. Having decided what the weaknesses of these views are, I will attempt to show what it would take to formulate a conclusive reply to the sceptic's case. Finally, I will make some very provisional suggestions concerning the possibility of arriving at such a formulation.

CHAPTER II

BEHAVIOUR AND CRITERIA OF MENTAL STATES

I propose to examine, in this chapter, some attempts to provide an answer to scepticism about other persons' mental states. The arguments which I shall discuss have two features in common. First of all, they are all attempts to show that the relation between behaviour and mental states is not, as the sceptic holds, "merely contingent"; secondly, in none of these arguments do we have a clear statement as to what alternative view of the relation between behaviour and mental states is being suggested.

Three arguments have been chosen for examination; two of them are by the same philosopher. I have chosen these three because they represent varying degrees of boldness and caution; the first is very bold, the second is, on occasion, both bold and cautious, the third is quite cautious.

A. MENTAL STATES AND ORDINARY LANGUAGE.

One of the earliest of the recent wave of anti-sceptical arguments can be found in an article by Norman Malcolm entitled "Moore and Ordinary Language".¹ Here Malcolm attempts to defend what he thinks to be Moore's philosophical method. It is possible, he maintains, to conclusively refute the claims made by sceptical philosophers by appealing to "ordinary language." Malcolm does not go into great detail about the problem of other minds; his main concern is to defend a philosophical method which can be applied to various areas of philosophical inquiry. But in defending this method he does offer some examples of the kinds of sceptical

1. "Moore and Ordinary Language", The Philosophy of G.E. Moore, ed. P.A. Schilpp (Chicago: Northwestern University, 1942), pp.345-368.

claims he thinks can be refuted in this manner. One of these examples is the claim, "You do not know for certain that there are any feelings or experiences other than your own."² Malcolm suggests that it is possible to counter the sceptic's claim by showing that we can, and often do, in fact "know it to be absolutely certain" that another person is in pain.³ In our ordinary linguistic distinctions, argues Malcolm, there are "circumstances" which, if present, allow us to correctly make the claim, "I know that my wife has a toothache." When that claim is made under the circumstances which our ordinary distinctions require, we have a "paradigm of absolute certainty" about the mental states of others.⁴

Malcolm seems to have no doubts that this kind of reply can successfully refute the kind of sceptical argument that we have already discussed. Since our ordinary distinctions are designed to cover situations which do in fact occur, he argues, and since (by way of application) the phrases, "knowing that another person is in pain" and "not knowing that another person is in pain", are designed to distinguish, in ordinary experience, between situations which often do occur, when the sceptical philosopher says that "we can never know that another person is in pain" he must be using this phrase in a new and strange way.

Therefore, when the sceptic makes such a claim we need only remind him that there are situations when "we know that another person is in pain." Such a reminder, claims Malcolm, is not mere question-begging; it constitutes a "good refutation, a refutation that shows the falsity of

2. Ibid., p.347

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p.354

the statement in question."⁵ This is true because our ordinary experience provides for situations in which the claim, "My wife has (or had) a tooth-ache", can be falsified; but the sceptic, when he says that we can never know for certain that another person is in pain, does not mean that all claims to knowledge of other persons' mental states are falsifiable in the ordinary sense; he is not saying that we do not pay close enough attention to the facts. Neither is he suggesting that there is no difference at all between our (ordinary) paradigms of "knowing that...." and "not knowing that...." . Instead, he is recommending that we should adopt a new way of describing the facts - a way which, in Malcolm's opinion, is less helpful than the original ordinary distinction. For the sceptic is suggesting that the two different situations that were formerly covered by the phrases "knowing that..." and "not knowing that...", respectively, should now be covered by the one phrase, "not knowing that...", and that we reserve the phrase, "knowing that...", for a situation which can never occur.

Such a change in the way we describe our world, continues Malcolm, would gain "nothing whatever"; for the result would be that a phrase which already does its job well would have to do "double duty"⁶, i.e. it would have to cover two kinds of clearly differing cases, where it had formerly only covered one of them. To so overwork descriptive phrases would be, it seems, unnecessarily tedious. And this is why "ordinary language is correct language"⁷: its distinction do their jobs economically and they do jobs which must get done. Whatever the sceptic is speaking about when he claims

5. Ibid., p.349.

6. Ibid., p.364.

7. Ibid., p.357.

that we can never know that another person is in pain, he is not speaking about the same thing we are when we use those words. If, by chance, he is, his assertion is plainly false; if he is not, then he is telling us nothing new about the world, and certainly nothing which ought to worry us; for he is only recommending that we describe our world in terms which, if adopted, would result only in confusion. Sceptical claims, on this view, at best blur, and at worst distort, our vision of the world.

The difficulties which this overall approach to philosophical problems leads to have been well-documented in subsequent discussions. Malcolm himself has realised the inadequacies and has further developed (and altered) his position elsewhere.⁸ We will consider a later view proposed by Malcolm in the next section. I have just two remarks to make concerning the helpfulness of the philosophical method defended in this article for the problem of knowing the mental states of others.

First of all, it is not enough to argue that because ordinary experience provides us with "circumstances" in which we would say "I know that she is in pain" that this proves that there just are cases of "knowing that another person is in pain". For one thing, there are cases in which all of those "circumstances" are present and yet if we were to say, "I know that she is in pain" we would be wrong. And this is where the sceptic gets worried about the adequacy of those "circumstances" which Malcolm so staunchly defends.

8. For a criticism of Malcolm's paper see Roderick Chisholm, "Philosophers and Ordinary Language", Philosophical Review, LX (1951), pp.317-328. Malcolm replies, stating his misgivings concerning his earlier view in "Philosophy and Ordinary Language", Philosophical Review, LX (1951), pp.329-340.

This leads to my second comment. The suggestion that "ordinary language is correct language", backed up by the arguments that Malcolm offers, is not enough to deprive the sceptic of his doubts. The sceptic might well reply to Malcolm's line of argument that the assumption - which remains unargued by Malcolm - that there is a real difference between those situations ("circumstances") that we ordinarily label as "knowing that..." and "not knowing that..." is precisely the assumption that he is calling into question! For the sceptical case leans heavily on the argument that we have no more to "go on" in the circumstances in which we say "I know that..." than we do in those in which we say "I thought I knew, but I was wrong." In both situations the same "evidence" was available. To finally topple the sceptic, much more groundwork must be laid. We must now examine some attempts to lay that groundwork.

B. THE CRITERIA OF PAIN.

Malcolm presents a more sophisticated and cautious discussion of similar problems in a later work, his lengthy review of Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations.⁹ It is developed within the context of an exposition of Wittgenstein's views; but because, as I shall later attempt to show, it may be necessary to distinguish between Wittgenstein's position and that which is attributed to him by some of his interpreters, I shall treat Malcolm's remarks as if he were defending only his own position.

Malcolm deals with a number of topics related to problems in the "philosophy of mind"; but, for the present, I am interested only in what he has to say about our knowledge of other persons' mental states.

9. "Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations," reprinted in (ed.) Chappell, op.cit. pp.74-100.

In the article on Moore's method, Malcolm had spoken of "circumstances" in which we would, in ordinary experience, say that "we know that she is in pain." He further specifies those circumstances in the article we are presently discussing, as he attempts "with some reluctance" to explain Wittgenstein's distinction between a "symptom" of something's being so and a "criterion" of something's being so. He does this by discussing an area which he had, for the most part, ignored in the earlier article - the "teaching and learning (of) the use of words."

Try to imagine, realistically and in detail, how you would teach someone the meaning of "saying the ABC silently to oneself." This, you may think, is merely psychology. But if you have succeeded in bringing to mind what it is that would show that he grasped your teaching, that he understood the use of the words, then you have elicited the "criterion" for their use - and that is not psychology. Wittgenstein exhorts us, over and over, to bethink ourselves of how we learned to use this or that form of words or how we would teach it to a child. The purpose of this is not to bring philosophy down to earth (which it does), but to bring into view those features of someone's circumstances and behaviour that settle the question of whether the words (e.g., "He is calculating in his head") rightly apply to him. Those features constitute the "criterion" of calculating in one's head. It is logically possible that someone should have been born with a knowledge of the use of an expression or that it should have been produced in him by a drug; that his knowledge came about by way of the normal process of teaching is not necessary. What is necessary is that there should be something on the basis of which we judge whether he has that knowledge. To undertake to describe this may be called a "logical" investigation, even though one should arrive at the description by reflecting on that logically inessential process of teaching and learning.¹⁰

10. Ibid., pp.86-87.

The subject which Malcolm touches upon here is not unrelated to the recent controversies over the relative merits of the Paradigm Case Argument (hereafter PCA). That Malcolm is offering something like a PCA can be seen by comparing his remarks to a formulation of the PCA by Antony Flew:

Crudely: if there is any word the meaning of which can be taught by reference to paradigm cases, then no argument whatever could ever prove that there are no cases whatever of whatever it is. Thus, since the meaning of "of his own freewill" can be taught by reference to such paradigm cases as that in which a man, under no social pressures, marries the girl he wants to marry (how else could it be taught?): it cannot be right, on any grounds whatsoever to say that no one ever acts of his own freewill. For cases such as the paradigm, which must occur if the word is ever to be thus explained (and which certainly do in fact occur), are not in that case specimens which might have been wrongly identified: to the extent that the meaning of the expression is given in terms of them they are, by definition, what "acting of one's own freewill" is.¹¹

J.O. Urmson, in his discussion of the PCA, puts it even more concisely: in the PCA "a doubt whether anything is X is exposed by showing that certain things are standard cases of what the term in question is designed to describe."¹²

Malcolm, in trying to have us imagine the situations in which we would teach someone the meaning of a given term or phrase, is apparently trying to keep before our minds the actual situations which, as Urmson puts it, "the term in question is designed to describe." We must ask, says Malcolm, what, in such situations, "would settle the question of whether the words... rightly apply." To have found those features which "settle" the

11. Antony Flew, "Philosophy and Language", reprinted in Essays in Conceptual Analysis, ed. Flew (London: Macmillan, 1963), p.19.

12. J.O. Urmson, "Some Questions Concerning Validity", in (ed.) Flew, op.cit., p.120

matter is to have "elicited the 'criterion'" for the use of the term or phrase.

There is one criticism which is often lodged against the PCA and other forms of the "appeal to ordinary language" which Malcolm, in the lengthy passage quoted above, deals with, in my opinion, adequately. It has often been charged that such appeals depend primarily on a specific psychological theory about the way in which children do in fact learn the meanings of words.¹³ Malcolm's point that the observation of the "logically inessential process of teaching and learning" can be a helpful means of conducting the "'logical' investigation" into the meanings of words is well taken.

However, although Malcolm may have successfully countered a particular criticism, it is not at all clear that he does not subject himself to more serious and damaging criticisms of the kind often directed against the PCA - not the least significant being that such arguments commit the "naturalistic fallacy",¹⁴ or the "definist fallacy." We must consider objections of this sort; but first we must see whether what Malcolm is suggesting in this context leads to something like a PCA for "pain", or "another person's pain".

To clarify Malcolm's position, we must decide whether, when he stresses the importance of reminding "ourselves of how we learned to use this or that form of words" in order "to bring into view those features which... settle the question of whether the words...rightly apply" in a

13. cf. R.J. Richman, "On the Argument of the Paradigm Case", Australasian Journal of Philosophy, XXXIX (1961), pp.75-81.

14. cf. J.W.N. Watkins, "Farewell to the Paradigm Case Argument", Analysis, XVIII (1957-58), pp.25-42.

particular situation, he is getting at the same thing as is Flew when he (Flew) says that if a term is taught by reference to a standard case which exhibits certain features, then it can never be said that a case exhibiting those same features as the standard case is not properly described by the term in question. Malcolm offers elaboration as he goes on to further explain the distinction between a "criterion" and a "symptom":

What makes something into a symptom of y is that experience teaches us that it is always or usually associated with y; that so-and-so is the criterion of y is a matter, not of experience, but of "definition"... The satisfaction of the criterion of y establishes the existence of y beyond question; it repeats the kind of case in which we were taught to say "y". The occurrence of a symptom of y may also establish the existence of y "beyond question" - but in a different sense. The observation of a brain process may make it certain that a man is in pain - but not in the same way that his pain behaviour makes it certain. Even if physiology has established that a specific event in the brain accompanies bodily pain, still it could happen...that a man might be in pain without that brain event occurring. But if the criterion of being in pain is satisfied then he must be in pain.¹⁵ (emphasis mine)

This seems to be straightforward enough; given the criteria of pain there can be no question whether or not he is in pain - the existence of pain is established "beyond question". Malcolm has apparently rejected the notion that the criteria of pain are in some sense conclusive evidence of pain - this would not make criteria any stronger than symptoms. Rather, he sees the criteria of y as defining y ; so that if a man denies that y is the case when the criteria of y are present, that man is exhibiting his ignorance of the meaning (definition) of y.

15. Malcolm, op.cit., p.87.

Thus it would seem that Malcolm's view is in fact a PCA (along the lines of Flew's formulation of that argument) for "another person's pain." He is saying that because we can teach a child the meaning of the term "toothache" by pointing to a paradigm case of toothache, i.e. by pointing to a person who is (presumably) holding his jaw, grimacing, and groaning - and saying to the child, "That is what it means to have a toothache" (which, I take it, would be to repeat "the kind of case in which we were taught to say 'y'") - then it can never be the case that someone exhibiting the behaviour which constitute the criteria for toothaches is not having a toothache.

Malcolm's contention that "the criterion of y is a matter...of 'definition' "would seem to commit him to the view that the statements "He is groaning", "He is grimacing", "He is holding his jaw", etc., logically entail the statement "He has a toothache". Such a view, however, is not a comfortable one - mainly for the reason that it is plainly false. The force of the sceptical position, which this argument is designed to refute, derives from its contention that, given the presence of all the behaviour which Malcolm calls "criteria", it still might be - and at least occasionally is - the case that there is no toothache.

The obviousness of the sceptical point has, as I have already suggested,¹⁶ made it extremely difficult for philosophers to adopt the crude behaviourist position that Malcolm seems to be defending. For, in attempting to "bring philosophy down to earth", Malcolm is apparently compelled to deny the existence of some very "earthy" occurrences - pretended, or feigned, pains. But Malcolm wisely stops short of such a

16. see Chapter I.

denial; he quickly qualifies his contention by explaining that he does not mean to say that statements describing behaviour "logically imply" the statement that someone is in pain.

Pain-behavior is a criterion of pain only in certain circumstances. If we come upon a man exhibiting violent pain-behavior, couldn't something show that he is not in pain? Of course. For example, he is rehearsing for a play; or he has been hypnotized and told, "You will act as if you are in pain, although you won't be in pain," and when he is released from his hypnotic state he has no recollection of having been in pain; or his behavior suddenly ceases and he reports in apparent bewilderment that it was as if his body had been possessed - for his movements had been entirely involuntary, and during the "seizure" he had felt no pain; or he had been narrowly missed by a car and as soon as a sum for damages has been pressed into his hand, his pain-behavior ceases and he laughs at the hoax; or....etc. The expressions of pain are a criterion of pain in certain "surroundings", not in others.¹⁷

Malcolm finds the circumstances or "surroundings" in which pain-behavior is a criterion of pain difficult to delimit; as a matter of fact they finally, he feels, escape delimiting. There is no complete list of circumstances against which we might check a particular case in order to decide whether or not the pain-behavior is the criterion of pain. Such a list would have to be, he says, "indefinite" - but not, he insists, "infinite." "Therefore, entailment conditions cannot be formulated; there are none."¹⁸

Malcolm anticipates that his readers might find this conclusion "hard to accept"; and indeed it is. But the disappointment lies, not in

17. Ibid., pp.87-88.

18. Ibid., p.88.

the fact that we are finally told that we may be wrong in saying that another person is in pain even when the "criterion" is present - many of us have long been fearful of that possibility - but the disappointment, in this case, arises mainly from the fact that Malcolm had promised so much, only to leave us with so little. One had hoped that the emphatic assertion that "the satisfaction of the criteria of y establishes the existence of y beyond question" would have led to a conclusion more startling than the one to which Malcolm brings us (within the course of only three pages).

Rogers Albritton in his article on the term "criterion" in Wittgenstein's philosophy¹⁹ - a more thorough study of the subject than Malcolm's - makes little progress beyond Malcolm's conclusion, but does write with a clearer awareness of the dilemmas than is manifest in Malcolm's discussion. Albritton argues that, in Wittgenstein's view, a man who exhibits pain-behaviour "under circumstances that have no tendency to show that he is not so behaving because he has a toothache, always or almost always is so behaving because he has a toothache."²⁰ In Albritton's opinion, Wittgenstein would consider the foregoing to be a "necessary truth."

That a man behaves in a certain manner, under certain circumstances, cannot entail that he has a toothache. But it can entail something else, which there is no short way of stating exactly, so far as I can find. Roughly, then: it can entail that anyone who is aware that the man is behaving in this manner, under these circumstances, is justified in saying that the man has a toothache, in the absence of any special reason to say something more guarded (as, for example,

19. Rogers Albritton, "On Wittgenstein's Use of the Term 'Criterion'", The Journal of Philosophy, LVI (1959), pp.845-857.

20. Ibid., p.856.

that there is an overwhelming probability that the man has a toothache). Even more roughly: that a man behaves in a certain manner, under certain circumstances, can entail that he almost certainly has a toothache.²¹

Albritton cannot finally decide what exactly Wittgenstein is getting at; nor can he decide whether or not he agrees with what he "roughly" thinks Wittgenstein to be saying:

I cannot here discuss the question whether there are criteria, in this sense, of having a toothache. I am inclined to think that there are not. The propositions that would have to be necessary and not contingent if there were in this sense behavioral criteria of having a toothache do not seem to me to be clear cases of propositions that are necessary and not contingent. On the other hand, they do not seem to me to be clear cases of propositions that are contingent and not necessary, either. They seem to me to be neither necessary nor contingent. It may be sufficient for Wittgenstein's philosophical purposes that these and other such propositions should have this indefinite status, though he appears to have thought that they had the definite status of necessary propositions. But that is another question that I have not space to discuss in this paper.²²

We are led, by these discussions to the conclusions that the relationship which holds between pains and pain-behaviour is an intimate but puzzling one. What is puzzling is the notion that if the criteria of y guarantee the presence of y it could never be possible to be wrong in thinking y to be present when one is confronted with that behaviour which constitutes the criteria of y. This seemingly unattainable guarantee symbolises the uncomfortable tension-point between scepticism and behaviourism at which many philosophers are precariously balanced. To say that if

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid., pp.856-857.

the criteria of "toothache" are satisfied then there can be no question whether there is in fact a toothache is, among other things, to commit the "definist" fallacy.

But the nagging feeling that the relationship is somewhat more important than the sceptic thinks it to be is not easily dispelled, even in the face of the kind of failures witnessed in this chapter. To many, the relation between groaning and having a toothache is more intimate than the relation between singing a plain-song and having a toothache (no matter how sure a sign that may be in monasteries).

But the conclusiveness of the "criteriological" views which we have been examining finally escapes us. The note of hesitancy that can be detected when Malcolm says that "pain-behavior is a criterion of pain in certain circumstances", or when Albritton toys with the possibility that, given a satisfaction of the criteria, the man will "almost certainly" have a toothache, leaves some question as to whether the demands of the sceptic have been adequately considered at all. What are the "circumstances" in which, for Malcolm, groaning, grimacing, etc., are not a sufficient basis to claim that someone has a toothache? Malcolm begs off at this point, pleading that the rules which govern the use of terms in ordinary language are "too vague, too loose". Fair enough! But this brings us back to our starting point. What finally is the difference between real pains and feigned pains? In both cases there will be groans and grimaces. But a real pain is a groan and a grimace accompanied by not-being-hypnotised, not-rehearsing-for-a-play, etc. However, more must be said than this. What, finally, is the difference between a real pain and a successful pretence of pain? All the "criteria" are present; all the "circumstances" of pretence are absent. Certainly there are men whose pretended pains are

more "realistic" than our real pains.

But, someone might answer, truth wins out in the end. Hopefully time will finally reveal all pretence. In most cases we have to just wait and see. And what will we look for? Any number of things: a smile, a bow, a sudden break in the mood of the situation, a quick glance to see if people are watching the show, a "How am I doing?", a wink..... And when we catch something, we will begin to suspect, not that the pain-behaviour wasn't there after all, but that the pain was absent. This is the point: that all Malcolm and Albritton finally tell us is that the criteria of pain insure the existence of pain when there is pain - a conclusion which the sceptic would have happily admitted at the beginning.

I am not convinced, however, that the final word on the view of behaviour as criteria has been pronounced.

CHAPTER III

THE ASCRIPTION OF STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

In the preceding discussion I have at several points raised a very general kind of objection which now requires further stressing. Something firmly imbedded in our everyday experience forces us to recoil from the thought that our talk about "mental" states can somehow be reduced to talk about physical behaviour. Thus, we shall be suspicious, if not totally pessimistic, about any philosophical view which would commit us to a reduction of statements about, say, pain to statements about observable behaviour. The temptation is strong to give only the hastiest of considerations to such a viewpoint; and, by the same token, we cannot be terribly hopeful concerning the suggestion that the relation between statements about mental states and statements about physical behaviour is such that, given a list of true statements of the latter kind, the truth of one of the former is somehow guaranteed, or (remembering Malcolm's dilemma) "implied."

The unattractiveness of these views is due, as we have already noted, to the very common place occurrence of pretended, or feigned, mental states. The facts of life force us to conclude that no list of true descriptions of the type: "He is groaning", "He is grimacing", "He is holding his jaw", "He says, 'I am in pain'", etc., can ever make the assertion "He is in pain" a foregone conclusion - or, to put it another way: given such a list, it will always still make sense to ask, "But is he really in pain ?"

Whatever the connection, then, between overt behaviour and mental states, statements about mental states are not analysable into statements about overt behaviour. When we say that a man is in pain we are speaking -

at least in part - about something over and above his observable physical behaviour. Any philosophical position which does not do justice to, or account for, this element of the "over and above" is not paying close enough attention to the inescapable facts of our everyday experience. And a similar judgement must be made concerning the view that sees statements about physical behaviour as, in some sense, finally settling all questions about mental states.

Must we, then, go beyond Ryle to conclude that if there are no ghosts we will have to invent them? Before resorting to such a prematurely desperate tactic there is yet another possibility which might be explored - that of finding a position which will not only do justice to the apparent ease (and, in some cases, skill) with which we so often respond to the sufferings of others, but which will also account for the fact of life which remains as the sceptic's most tempting lure: that one can be, and often is, deceived or mistaken about the mental states of others - and that this deception can often be accounted for by reasons other than that one failed to detect all of the relevant observable activity.

We will surely be encouraged in our search for such a position not only by the knowledge that other philosophers have expressed a desire to find such an account, but also by the fact that a philosopher of note has already expended some efforts in this direction. In this chapter I propose to carefully examine the position outlined by P.F. Strawson in his discussion of "Persons".¹ Strawson's speculations are motivated by an awareness of many

1. There are two published versions of this essay. All of my references shall be to the later one which appeared as Chapter 3 of Strawson's book Individuals (London: Methuen and Co., 1959). I am also indebted to two discussions of Strawson's views: Alvin Plantinga "Things and Persons" Review of Metaphysics, XIV (1960-61) pp.493-519, and H. Schwyzer "Strawson and 'Persons'", unpublished.

of the same difficulties which I have been pointing out. He is anxious to avoid traditional scepticism - which he labels "Cartesianism" - but at the same time he is concerned to steer clear of behaviourism. The main target of his attack is the Cartesian epistemological tradition, a basic tenet of which is that one can know "states of consciousness" only from "one's own case." This view, which I have roughly sketched in Chapter I, involves the claim that if I am to ascribe a mental state to another person it can only be on the basis of behaviour which I take to be a "sign" of the presence of a particular mental state, and that I take this behaviour to be a "sign" because I have observed a correlation between the state and the behaviour in my own case.

But to reject the thesis that all that one knows about mental states comes from one's own case is not, for Strawson, to be forced to accept the behaviourist thesis that all such knowledge derives ultimately from observing cases other than one's own (which is to reduce mental-state propositions to overt-behaviour propositions). Strawson rejects both of these views in favour of one which is (perhaps necessarily) more difficult to understand than either of them. But since his discussion promises to move in a direction in which present considerations have forced us to move it will be well for us to note both his progress and the difficulties which he may encounter by the way.

A. CONDITIONS FOR THE ASCRIPTION OF STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

Strawson's project is to deal with a cluster of questions, of a very general nature, of which the problems we have been discussing can be seen as particular examples: how it is that "each of us distinguishes between himself and states of himself on the one hand, and what is not

himself or a state of himself on the other"? "What are the conditions of our making this distinction, and how are they fulfilled? In what way do we make it, and why do we make it in the way we do?"² To understand the meaning of these questions, explains Strawson, is to see why the traditional solipsistic issue is not "a genuine issue at all."³

The sceptic goes wrong in never questioning how it is possible to frame the sceptical questions in the language in which they are framed. To avoid this error, Strawson sets out to investigate the conditions of talking about ourselves and our states of consciousness in the manner in which we do talk, i.e. in the way we ascribe to ourselves actions, intentions, sensations, thoughts, feelings, perceptions, memories, locations, attitudes, etc. The main points of the solution which Strawson comes up with are contained in the following quotation:

There would be no question of ascribing one's own states of consciousness, or experiences, to anything, unless one also ascribed, or were ready and able to ascribe, states of consciousness, or experiences, to other individual entities of the same logical type as that thing to which one ascribes one's own states of consciousness. The condition of reckoning oneself as a subject of such predicates is that one should also reckon others as subjects of such predicates. The condition, in turn, of this being possible, is that one should be able to distinguish from one another, to pick out or identify, different subjects of such predicates, i.e. different individuals of the same type concerned. The condition, in turn, of this being possible is that the individuals concerned, including oneself, should be of a certain unique type; of a type, namely, such that to each individual of that type there must be ascribed, or ascribable, both states of consciousness and corporeal characteristics.⁴

2. Ibid., p.87

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p.104

These conditions, Strawson insists, must be satisfied if we are going to ascribe states of consciousness to anything at all.

After introducing his distinction between "M - predicates" i.e. things which we ascribe to the very same individuals to which we ascribe states of consciousness, but which we also ascribe "to material bodies to which we would not dream of applying predicates ascribing states of consciousness" - predicates such as "weighs 10 stone", "is in the drawing room" - and "P - predicates", i.e. predicates which directly ascribe states of consciousness, or at least "imply the possession of consciousness" - such as "is smiling", "is going for a walk", "is in pain", "is thinking hard", "believes in God" - Strawson goes on to add another condition for ascribing states of consciousness:

Clearly there is no sense in talking of identifiable individuals of a special type, a type, namely, such that they possess **both** M-predicates and P-predicates, unless there is in principle some way of telling, with regard to any individual of that type, and any P-predicate, whether that individual possesses that P-predicate. And, in the case of at least some P-predicates, the ways of telling must constitute in some sense logically adequate kinds of criteria for the ascription of the P-predicate.⁵

What we have then, in brief, are three conditions which make it possible for us to ascribe states of consciousness to anything at all:

- 1) one must be able to ascribe P-predicates both to oneself and to others if one is going to ascribe a P-predicate to either oneself or others.
- 2) one must be able to ascribe P-predicates to the very same individual as that to which one ascribes M-predicates.

5. Ibid., p.105

- 3) one must have ways of telling whether a given individual possesses a P-predicate which constitute - in at least some cases - logically adequate criteria for the ascription of the P-predicate.

For our purposes, (3) is by far the most interesting of the three premises which Strawson suggests. But since these premises are interdependent, we will not be able to consider it in complete isolation from (1) and (2).

For Strawson is not only maintaining - as some philosophers have recently seemed to be maintaining⁶ - that the sceptic is as a matter of fact wrong when he arrives at the conclusion that we can never know with any degree of certainty whether another person is in pain. Strawson is saying that the conditions which make it possible for us to speak of states of consciousness at all, whether they be our own or others', are such that the sceptic could not even frame his question or his conclusion if it were not possible to ascribe states of consciousness to others, i.e. Strawson is contending that if the sceptic can formulate the sceptical argument the sceptic is wrong. This latter point will hold only if Strawson can show that a necessary condition of speaking about states of consciousness is that there must be, in some cases, logically adequate criteria for ascribing P-predicates. And, if we can take all of this to mean that Strawson will show that we could not even speak of states of consciousness in the first place unless we had already correctly ascribed a state of consciousness to another person, Strawson's point will be a forceful one indeed. We must give our careful attention to so hopeful a possibility.

6. I take Malcolm to be suggesting this in "Moore and Ordinary Language" (see Chapter II); and also John Wisdom in "The Concept of Mind" reprinted in (ed.) Chappell, op.cit., pp.49-59, especially p.59: "The question whether sometimes we do know what is in the mind of another...is a question of fact and not philosophy. But the fact is we do."

B. THE DUAL - ASRIPTIVE NATURE OF P - PREDICATES.

Strawson's first, and perhaps most basic, contention is that no position which sees one kind of ascription as primary, whether it chooses the self-ascription as does Cartesianism or the other-ascription as in behaviourism, can do justice to the manner in which we ascribe states of consciousness to anything at all. The Cartesian, e.g., wants to say that he can "look into himself" and "see", or "pick out", a sensation and assign to it a label ("I call this 'pain'"). Having done so, he also notices that there is certain physical behaviour which (often) accompanies the occurrence of this sensation. By observing the correlation between the sensation and the exhibited behaviour, he can infer that another person is experiencing a sensation similar to that which he calls pain by observing that the other person exhibits behaviour similar to that which he exhibits when he has that sensation. Along the lines of this analysis, when one utters the third-person statement "He is in pain", one is saying, in effect, "He is (most likely) having the same kind of private sensation that I have when I exhibit that kind of (observable) behaviour."

But this, says Strawson, will not do. The Cartesian, in beginning from his own case, has already (in one sense) ruled out the possibility of arriving at anything resembling a sceptical conclusion; but he has also (in another sense) already admitted too much to make his conclusion a coherent one: for

if the things one ascribes states of consciousness to, in ascribing them to others, are thought of as a set of Cartesian egos to which only private experiences can, in correct logical grammar, be ascribed, then (the question of how one can ascribe states of consciousness to others) is unanswerable and this problem is insoluble. If, in identifying the things to which states of consciousness are to be ascribed,

private experiences are to be all one has to go on, then, just for the very same reason as that for which there is, from one's own point of view, no question of telling that a private experience is one's own, there is also no question of telling that a private experience is another's. All private experiences, all states of consciousness, will be mine, i.e. no one's. To put it briefly. One can ascribe states of consciousness to oneself only if one can identify other subjects of experience. And one cannot identify others if one can identify them only as subjects of experience, possessors of states of consciousness.⁷

What is being argued here by Strawson is this: unless the Cartesian can distinguish himself, or his own experiences, on the one hand, from someone else, or experiences not-his-own, on the other, there is no place for introducing the words "my", "one's own", or even "I", into the discussion - there is as yet no sense in speaking of "private" experiences. That is to say that there is as yet no occasion for saying - or noticing - that this is my private experience unless there is already some reason for doing so, i.e. unless I already know what it is like for something to be not-mine, or someone else's private experience. This is what Strawson is getting at when he says that if all private experiences are mine then they are "no-one's" - there is no question of worrying about what is "mine" if I do not yet know what it would be like for something to be "yours", not-mine. Presumably Strawson would see a similar objection as being appropriate in answering the behaviourist: there can be no question of my picking out "an-other" case unless I have some reason for distinguishing it from "my-self". The ability to ascribe to both cases, then, is presupposed in the ability to ascribe to either case.

7. Strawson, op.cit., p.100

If Strawson's argument here is correct, both the Cartesian and the behaviourist assume the same philosophical error: the belief in "givens" which need only to be labelled. They assume that all of the distinctions, all of the "markings", are already in re; Nature itself has drawn the boundaries, and they wait for us to notice them. This assumption fails to account for the fact that in order for us to "single out" a particular case and apply to it a particular label we must already be capable of marking-off our world in certain ways, of drawing certain boundaries for specific reasons - i.e. we must possess certain concepts.

C. THE LOGICAL PRIMITIVENESS OF THE CONCEPT OF A PERSON.

Strawson anticipates a possible reply from the Cartesian to his argument. Could it not still be argued that since we can with so little difficulty identify and distinguish bodies, we should be able, with only a more extended effort, to identify a "subject of experience" indirectly by thinking of it as "'the subject that stands to that body in the same special relation as I stand to this one', or, in other words, 'the subject of those experiences which stand in the same unique causal relation to body N as my experiences stand to body M'?"

This, says Strawson, is precisely the kind of rejoinder which he has tried to show will not work; for

it requires me to have noted that my experiences stand in a special relation to body M, when it is just the right to speak of my experiences at all that is in question. That is to say, it requires me to have noted that my experiences stand in a special relation to body M; but it requires me to have noted this as a subject of experience, i.e. as a condition of thinking of any experience as mine. So long as we persist in talking, in the mode of this explanation, of

experiences on the one hand, and bodies on the other, the most I may be allowed to have noted is that experiences, all experiences, stand in a special relation to body M, that body M is unique in just this way, that this is what makes body M unique among bodies.⁸

Apparently, what we must do is to desist from speaking of "experiences on the one hand and bodies on the other." The success of Strawson's argument finally depends on his ability to not only bring together the self- and other-ascriptive aspects of P-predicates into a rather intimate union, but also on his showing that a similar relation holds between mental experiences and bodily behaviour. He objects to the Cartesian's thinking of himself as standing in a "special relation" to a body. The Cartesian, it seems, has no right to do this because in order for him to think of himself as a "self" he must already be capable of thinking of himself as possessing both states of consciousness and corporeal characteristics. And, it would appear to follow from this, if it is necessary for the recognition of one-self as a self that one thinks of oneself as possessing both states of consciousness and corporeal characteristics, and if it is also true that one could not ascribe anything to oneself unless one were already capable of ascribing it to another person, then, by implication, one must already be thinking of other selves as possessing both states of consciousness and corporeal characteristics. To explain this we must, in Strawson's words, acknowledge "the logical primitiveness of the concept of a person", i.e. "the concept of a type of entity such that both predicates ascribing states of consciousness and predicates ascribing corporeal characteristics... are equally applicable to a single individual of that single type."⁹

8. Ibid., p.101

9. Ibid., pp.101-102

It is not an easy thing to understand exactly what Strawson means here; there can be no question, however, concerning the importance which he assigns to this argument:

a necessary condition of states of consciousness being ascribed at all is that they should be ascribed to the very same thing as certain corporeal characteristics, a certain physical situation &c. That is to say, states of consciousness could not be ascribed at all, unless they were ascribed to persons, in the sense I have claimed for this word.¹⁰

If we are - as the Cartesian would have us be - "a sort of compound of two kinds of subjects; a subject of experience (a pure consciousness, an ego) on the one hand, and a subject of corporeal attributes on the other" - if this is what we are, then in the end we are not really made up of two subjects at all, or even of a "compound of subjects"; we are in fact best pictured as being composed of one subject, of corporeal attributes, and one "non-subject", of experiences:

For it becomes impossible to see how we could come by the idea of different, distinguishable, identifiable subjects of experiences - different consciousnesses - if this idea is thought of as logically primitive, as a logical ingredient in the compound of a person, the latter being composed of two subjects. For there could never be any question of assigning an experience, as such, to any subject other than oneself; and therefore never any question of assigning it to oneself either, never any question of ascribing it to a subject at all.¹¹

10. Ibid., p.102

11. Ibid.

Strawson is not saying that the notion of a "pure consciousness" does not make sense; he is saying that it can only make sense if it is a "secondary, non-primitive concept, which itself is to be explained, analysed, in terms of the concept of a person."¹² Therefore, the Cartesian, although he may think that he is starting from the beginning when he argues from the private consciousness, could not have made sense out of this notion if he had not already thought of a "person" to whom both states of consciousness and corporeal characteristics can be ascribed.

There are no doubt many questions (if not objections) which can be legitimately raised against the foregoing arguments. My own puzzlements will be expressed only in the most general manner. I am concerned, mainly, to ask whether the Cartesian has in any way been "refuted" at all as a result of Strawson's speculations. More simply, I am concerned to see whether the Cartesian can in fact go on asking sceptical questions, and giving them sceptical answers, in spite of Strawson's arguments.

This latter possibility is, I suggest, inadvertently allowed for in Strawson's own formulation of the conditions for ascribing states of consciousness to anything at all. Consider this phrase: "there would be no question of ascribing one's own states of consciousness, or experiences, to anything, unless one also ascribed, or were ready and able to ascribe, states of consciousness, or experiences, to other individual entities of

12. Ibid., p.103. cf.pp. 115-116: for this reason Strawson does not find the idea of "disembodied survival" to be meaningless (although he does suspect that it is "unattractive"), as long as the emphasis is on the fact that such survival is "disembodied."

the same logical type as that thing to which one ascribes one's own..." (emphasis mine). Could not the Cartesian reply to this point by saying that, although he would never think of denying it, he cannot see why this point, if true, makes it impossible for him to formulate his arguments? The only condition which is necessary, from Strawson's argument, is that if the Cartesian can identify a particular state of consciousness in his own case he must be "ready and able to ascribe" it to another case. But, presumably, to be "ready and able to ascribe" it to another case does not mean, for Strawson, that there must be other cases to which the predicate is correctly ascribable; it need only mean that one would be able to ascribe it to another case if such a case should come along. The Cartesian, it would seem, is not being forced to admit anything more than that he could not have identified a particular state of consciousness in his own case unless he were already capable of identifying that state in a case other than his own. But this is to require him to admit nothing more than that he is capable of, say, imagining another case.

The same kind of opening is available to the Cartesian in regard to Strawson's insistence on "the concept of a person" to which both P- and M-predicates can be ascribed. It would surely be possible for the sceptic to admit that he could not have gone beyond noting "that experiences, all experiences, stand in a special relation to body M, that body M is unique in just this way, that this is just what makes body M unique among bodies", unless he had already thought of a certain group of P-predicates as being ascribable to the very same thing as a certain group of M-predicates; and that this, in turn, depended upon his already having imagined there being other body-soul unities other than himself. This is, in a sense, where

the Cartesian has always started; he has argued: "I have always thought that there were in fact other conscious beings (to whom both P-predicates and M-predicates can be ascribed); but now I am asking whether I have not, all along, been only imagining this to be the case."

The point which I am trying to formulate can be put briefly: the sceptic may well agree with Strawson that it is a necessary condition of ascribing a P-predicate to anything at all that one should be "ready and able" to ascribe them to both one's own case and to another case, i.e. that in order for one to ascribe a state of consciousness to oneself one must also know what it would be like for it to be ascribed to another case. It is not clear that Strawson has forced the sceptic to make any stronger admission than this. And if he has not, the sceptic may still, with ease, go on to wonder whether there are in fact any other cases to which this P-predicate can be correctly ascribed.

I am not sure as to the conclusiveness of my suggestion; but it would seem that if the Cartesian were going to be finally subdued by an endeavour of the kind which Strawson has attempted, the arguments used would have to be more forceful than the ones which Strawson presents. I do not see how the sceptic's doubts can be silenced by anything less than an argument that would show this: that in order for the sceptic to even formulate his questions there must be cases other than his own to which states of consciousness can be correctly ascribed. And this is a conclusion which Strawson falls short of drawing. But, insofar as these puzzlements concerning Strawson's views are relevant to my present purpose they will be made more explicit in regard to Strawson's third

condition for the ascription of states of consciousness to anything at all, viz., that in at least some cases the ascription of a P-predicate must be made on the basis of what constitutes "logically adequate kinds of criteria."

D. CRITERIA FOR ASCRIBING STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

If Strawson's arguments up to this point have been at all successful, we will have gone through an experience similar to that which Norman Malcolm describes:

A philosopher feels himself in a difficulty about other minds because he assumes that first of all he is acquainted with mental phenomena "from his own case." What troubles him is how to make the transition from his own case to the case of others. When his thinking is freed of the illusion of the priority of his own case, then he is able to look at the familiar facts and to acknowledge that the circumstances, behavior, and utterances of others actually are his criteria (not merely his evidence) for the existence of their mental states. Previously this had seemed impossible.¹³

This is what Strawson hopes to make us see - that the "ways of telling" whether an individual possesses a particular P-predicate must be, in some cases, logically adequate criteria for ascribing that P-predicate. If this were not true, then

we should have to think of the ways of telling as signs of the presence, in the individual concerned, of this...state of consciousness. But then we could only know that the way of telling was a sign of the presence of the different thing ascribed by the P-predicate, by the observation of correlations between the two.

13. Norman Malcolm, "Knowledge of Other Minds", reprinted in (ed.) Chappell, op.cit., p.157.

But this observation we could each make only in one case,
viz. our own.¹⁴

And that, as he has tried to show, will not do. Therefore, according to Strawson, we must conclude that "the behaviour-criteria one goes on are not just signs of the presence of what is meant by the P-predicate, but are criteria of a logically adequate kind for the ascription of the P-predicate."¹⁵ As is the case with his other arguments, Strawson insists that he is not merely claiming "that we must accept this conclusion in order to avoid scepticism, but that we must accept it in order to explain the existence of the conceptual scheme in terms of which the sceptical problem is stated."¹⁶

Unless we accept this suggestion that there must be logically adequate criteria for ascribing states of consciousness, Strawson is saying, we cannot even express sceptical doubts. Let us, then, examine this contention closely. The first thing we notice is that Strawson expresses his claim with the same lack of conclusiveness with which he stated his earlier ones - the lack of conclusiveness which, I suggested, made his previous argument accomplish less than we could have hoped for. In this case the troublesome qualification appears in the following context: "in the case of at least some P-predicates, the ways of telling must constitute in some sense logically adequate criteria...." (emphasis mine). We can take the emphasised words to mean a number of things. Two interpretations strike one immediately as being possible:

14. Strawson, op. cit., p.106

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

- 1) that for every kind of P-predicate there are at least some instances of its ascription in which the ways of telling whether the subject possesses whatever the P-predicate ascribes constitute logically adequate criteria.
- 2) that for at least some kinds of P-predicates there are instances of their ascription in which the ways of telling whether the subject possesses whatever the P-predicate ascribes constitute logically adequate criteria.

One would hope that Strawson is implying (1), because it would seem that nothing less than that could succeed in convincing the sceptic. (1) would also, if it could be defended, meet the conditions which we have set for an adequate answer to the dilemmas concerning the pains of others. For, if it could be shown that what one has are logically adequate criteria for at least some instances of, say, ascriptions of pains to others (which would refute the "never - never" position of the sceptic) and yet not necessarily for every case of such ascriptions (which would account for the main premise of the sceptical argument, that we are often wrong...), we will have found the mediating position which we are seeking.

But, as we shall see, it becomes clear all too quickly that Strawson does not mean to be suggesting (1), but that he is advocating (2).

He suggests that there is a difference among P-predicates relating to the difference in the bases for their self - and other-ascriptive aspects.

Roughly, P-predicates can be divided into these groups:

- 1) Those which, when one ascribes them to oneself, one does not do so on the strength of observation of the kinds of things on the strength of which one ascribes them to others. Therefore, one ascribes them to oneself always on a different basis than one would to others. Included in this group are "is in pain", "is depressed."

- 2) Those which are generally ascribed to both oneself and to others on a different basis, yet the self-ascription can be corrected by oneself on the basis on which they are ascribed to one by others. This class would include "is jealous", "is happy".
- 3) Those which are ascribed to oneself by oneself, or to oneself by others, on the very same basis. Predicates such as "is intelligent", "is selfish," "is mean."

The troublesome group is, of course, (1); (3) need not concern us, and any problems that (2) raises can be solved in the process of settling problems about (1).

The problem here, as Strawson sees it, is this:

There remain many cases in which one has an entirely adequate basis for ascribing a P-predicate to oneself, and yet in which this basis is quite distinct from those on which one ascribes the predicate to another. Thus one says, reporting a present state of mind or feeling: "I feel tired, am depressed, am in pain". How can this fact be reconciled with the doctrine that the criteria on the strength of which one ascribes P-predicates to others are criteria of a logically adequate kind for this ascription? ¹⁷

Strawson's answer to this problem is as follows:

It is essential to the character of these predicates that they have both first - and third-person ascriptive uses, that they are both self-ascribable otherwise than on the basis of observation of the behaviour of the subject of them, and other-ascribable on the basis of behaviour criteria. To learn their use is to learn both aspects of their use. In order to have this type of concept, one must be both a self-ascriber and an other-ascriber of such predicates, and

17. Ibid., p.107

must see every other as a self-ascriber. In order to understand this type of concept, one must acknowledge that there is a kind of predicate which is unambiguously and adequately ascribable both on the basis of observation of the subject of the predicate and not on this basis, i.e. independently of observation of the subject; the second case is the case where the ascriber is also the subject.¹⁸

What Strawson has done is to take the stone which the sceptic had rejected and made it one of the chief cornerstones of his position. The sceptic had suggested that the fact that ascriptions of states of consciousness to others were made on a basis quite different from that on which they are ascribed to ourselves was enough to damn the other-ascriptive use, or at least to consign it to a position of everlasting inferiority. Strawson has now attempted to restore the other-ascriptive use to a place of equality with self-ascriptions. The results can be seen in terms of his key example.

To put the point - with a certain unavoidable crudity - in terms of one particular concept of this class, say, that of depression. We speak of behaving in a depressed way (of depressed behaviour) and we also speak of feeling depressed (of a feeling of depression). One is inclined to argue that feelings can be felt but not observed, and behaviour can be observed but not felt, and that therefore there must be room here to drive in a logical wedge. But the concept of depression spans the place where one wants to drive it in. We might say: in order for there to be such a concept as that of X's depression, the depression which X has, the concept must cover both what is felt, but not observed, by X, and what may be observed, but not felt, by others than X (for all values of X). But it is perhaps better to say: X's depression is something, one and the same thing, which is felt, but not observed, by X, and observed, but not felt, by others than X. (Of course, what can be observed can also be faked or disguised.) To refuse to accept this is to refuse to accept the

18. Ibid., p.108

structure of the language in which we talk about depression.¹⁹

One can see how this formulation, if adequate, could be considered as embodying an alternative to both scepticism and behaviourism. For "depression" can now be thought of as something which can be both seen and felt. Those who see it will judge it to be so on a basis different from that of those who feel it. But it is important to note that Strawson presses this point home, not merely by presenting this as one possible way of looking at the problem, a way which may get us out of sceptical difficulties, but by issuing a warning to the effect that a refusal "to accept this is to refuse to accept the structure of the language in which we talk about depression."

Since Strawson places the predicates "is depressed" and "is in pain" in the same class of P-predicates, i.e. that class of predicates which we ascribe to ourselves on a basis different from that on which we ascribe them to others, one can presume that the same thing will work for pain as he claims here for depression; so that "X's pain is something, one and the same thing, which is felt, but not observed, by X, and observed, but not felt, by others than X" - and that to deny this formula is tantamount to a refusal "to accept the structure of the language in which we talk about pain."

One critic has accused Strawson of making the very refusal he warns against:

Curiously enough, Strawson himself offers such an alternative way of describing a type of non-self-ascription of pain. For to

19. Ibid., pp.108 - 109.

say, as he does, that behaviour is criteria of a "logically adequate kind" for the ascription of predicates is not to say, as I think his analysis of depression implies, that the states of consciousness of others can be observed... At one point in his discussion Strawson admits both that another's pains are private and that one can be misled or deceived into thinking that another is in pain. His awareness of these facts, and indeed, they are facts, forces him to state his "criteriological" view in a way which will allow both for behaviour as a criterion and for the possibility of mistake.²⁰

The point that this critic is getting at is that if, for Strawson, behaviour is the criterion on the basis of which we ascribe the P-predicate, it would seem that he cannot also claim that the behaviour is the depression (or pain). If, when we are observing X's behaviour, we are observing X's pain, then the only sense we can make out of the suggestion that we ascribe pain to X on the basis of his behaviour is that we ascribe pain to X on the basis of his pain! And the same would hold for depression. It would seem that Strawson cannot have it both ways. He can either span the gap between pain and behaviour or he can eliminate it - but he cannot do both at once.

But this criticism will not do as such. For Strawson is, generally, very careful to say, not that behaviour is the criterion for ascribing P-predicates, but that the "observation of behaviour" is the criterion. If he sticks to this way of putting it he could argue that there is no more difficulty in ascribing pain to others on the basis of the observation of behaviour than there is in ascribing pain to oneself on the basis of the experiencing of a sensation. The only trouble is that Strawson does not stick consistently to this way of putting it; in one place, e.g.

20. T.A. Long, "Strawson and the Pains of Others", Australasian Journal of Philosophy, XLIII (May, 1965), p.76.

he says that this kind of predicate is "other-ascribable on the basis of behaviour criteria" (emphasis mine).²¹ He might say that this is only a slip - and it probably is. But it is an important slip - especially when it can be used as a counter-example to his own claim that slips of this sort constitute a refusal "to accept the structure of the language" in which we talk about P-predicates.

But, even forgiving Strawson for his departure from his own version of "the language in which we talk about....", his point does not escape serious criticism. For in arguing in this fashion Strawson does not do justice to the facts which we have promised not to ignore. He does, of course, insert the curious parenthetical remark that "what can be observed can also be faked or disguised"; but this does not help his point. It still remains that if what we see when we observe X's behaviour is X's pain, then it must follow that, for our purposes, when we see X's behaviour we are seeing X's pain, whether X is feeling it or not. The only way we could escape this conclusion would be by maintaining that what we see when we observe X's behaviour is X's pain, if, and only if, X is at the same time feeling his pain. But this does not get us anywhere. For since we cannot feel X's pain, the only way we have of telling whether he is feeling his pain is by what we see, which is, for Strawson, also his pain. But if what we see is his pain if and only if he is feeling pain, we are caught in a circle. Because, the only way we have of telling whether he is feeling his pain is by seeing his pain - but what we are seeing is his pain only if he is feeling it. And this is, of course, precisely our problem: whether or not we can ever know whether X is feeling pain from his behaviour. To be told that we

21. Strawson, op.cit., p.108.

can know that X is feeling pain by seeing his behaviour, but that this works only when X is feeling pain is to be taken back to our by-now-familiar starting-point.

Strawson cannot have it both ways. Either pains can be "seen", and once seen, no questions about whether the case is in fact a case of pain can be asked, or the behaviour is not the pain, but that on the basis of the observation of which we ascribe the pain, and then there can be no hope of "seeing" pains.

There do seem to be lingering doubts in Strawson's own mind concerning the finality of the position he has outlined. At any rate, he does not leave the matter here. I mentioned earlier Strawson's qualifications concerning "logically adequate criteria", namely, that we must have them "in the case of at least some P-predicates". After his excursion into the puzzles concerning pains which can be both seen and felt he returns to the question of how it is possible that "one can ascribe to oneself, not on the basis of observation, the very same thing that others may have, on the basis of observation, reasons of a logically adequate kind of ascribing to one?" ²²

We can begin to find an answer to this question, he suggests, by "moving a certain group of P-predicates to a central position in the picture"; they are those predicates which are characterised by the following features:

- a) They imply a state of consciousness without indicating any precise sensation or experience.
- b) They roughly fall under group (1) in our earlier schema; i.e. they are ascribed to oneself on a basis different than that on which others would ascribe them to one.

22. Ibid., p.110

- c) One feels a "minimal reluctance to concede that what is ascribed in these two different ways is the same."

The P-predicates which fit this description are ones such as "is going for a walk", "is coiling a rope", "is playing ball", "is writing a letter".

By moving these predicates into the spotlight Strawson hopes to "release us from the idea that the only things we can know about without observation or inference, or both, are private experiences." Since one could, presumably, know that he is "going for a walk" without observing his own bodily movements, it would seem that we have a case of one's being able to feel one and the same thing that others see.

I suspect that Strawson could be criticised here. One way of casting some doubt upon the point he tries to make here would be to show that one could raise significant questions concerning the possibility of ever being certain that another person is really "going for a walk" or "coiling a rope". It does not seem to be prima facie false to speak of "pretending to go for a walk" or "pretending to coil a rope". This would be to attempt to show that these predicates are really not very different, nor less problematic, than "is in pain" or "is depressed".

But if the kind of attempt we have just mentioned were unsuccessful, what would have been proved? This question raises the whole issue of what Strawson is trying to achieve by concentrating on a special group within a problematic class of P-predicates. He apparently wants to relieve us of doubts about other predicates in the same class by using examples that cause a minimum of worry. But couldn't this have the opposite effect of the intended one? Couldn't the sceptic reply that since these predicates raise no problems they are not members of the problematic class?

As an example, the sceptic might reply that since he can with little difficulty imagine robots "going for a walk" or machines "coiling a rope" he has good reason to deny that these predicates "imply a state of consciousness" at all. And what would Strawson say in answer to this? That this argument only proves that robots and machines are "conscious" beings? This kind of reply would surely be nothing more than question-begging.

Well, what does Strawson hope to accomplish by moving this group of P-predicates to center of the class? He has admitted that there is a genuine puzzle concerning an important class of P-predicates, i.e. that because we ascribe these predicates to ourselves on a basis which is entirely different than that on which others ascribe them to us we feel reluctant to draw the conclusion that in both cases what is being ascribed is the very same thing. He has then tried to relieve us of our misgivings by pointing to a group of P-predicates of this type which are ascribable on different bases in their self - and other-ascriptive aspects and are yet of a kind that we would concede with "minimal reluctance" that what is being ascribed is, in each case, the very same thing. Are we, then, to go on to immediately draw the conclusion that because we see no problems concerning these P-predicates there can not be any problems concerning any P-predicates in the class? Salvation by association is a rare phenomenon and it is unlikely that we have a case of it here. Might we not with equal - if not more - justification, conclude that Strawson has merely shown that there are some P-predicates which do not share the problematic nature of other P-predicates? And might there not even be some case for arguing that what he has shown is that these predicates are not really and fully P-predicates

after all? The question of whether this latter conclusion can be drawn need not be settled here. It will be sufficient to have pointed out that nothing has been accomplished by showing that all P-predicates are not problematic.

Thus, I must conclude that Strawson has not been successful in his attempt to provide a plausible alternative to scepticism and behaviourism. In suggesting that "in the case of at least some P-predicates, the ways of telling must constitute in some sense logically adequate criteria", he has held out the possibility that we might be able to show that one could not ever ascribe a P-predicate unless it were correctly ascribed in at least some cases. But he has not shown this to be true at all. Insofar as he gives examples of cases where the criteria are, allegedly, logically adequate, he deals with predicates whose status as "P-predicates" is at best marginal and at worst dubious. When he deals with the P-predicates which have caused all the trouble for philosophers we are forced to interpret his position as either a retreat to the behaviourism which he had promised to avoid or a denial of his claim to have found "logically adequate criteria."

There has been an interpretation offered of Strawson's overall purpose in these arguments which should be briefly considered. It has been argued that although "there is a conflict in Strawson's account concerning the existence or non-existence of a difference between pain and behaviour", the conflict can be reduced to a minimum by seeing it as a confusion which results when Strawson "suspends talk about criteria for the ascription of predicates and attempts to describe more concretely the essential character of a special class of predicates." In doing so,

Strawson does, it is admitted, come into "conflict with some of the facts about pain". But in his main argument Strawson does account for these facts "by saying, not that behaviour is a criterion for states of consciousness, but that behaviour is a criterion for the ascription of predicates."²³

On this interpretation, Strawson is saying something similar to the view suggested by Albritton, which we mentioned earlier; that, given the criteria, one is justified in saying that X is in pain, even though one might be wrong. I have only two brief comments to make concerning this interpretation of Strawson's endeavour. First of all, I think it is overly generous. If Strawson is only attempting to make explicit the rules governing the use (i.e. ascription) of P-predicates - i.e. if he is only telling us when it is appropriate to say such-and-such - then he has unnecessarily surrounded his arguments with an aura of importance which far exceeds the nature of his discussion. The sceptic is well aware of the conditions under which we would ordinarily say that a man is in pain; and if Strawson can add to this awareness the sceptic could stand corrected without any important philosophical traumas taking place. What Strawson seems to have promised - and it would not be difficult to document this claim - is that he was going to demonstrate why the sceptic could not even ask whether anyone else was ever in pain unless it was true that there were cases of other persons being in pain. This is the promise he has not kept. And this is my second comment: that if this interpretation of Strawson's endeavour is the correct one it is not at all clear that the view it ascribes to him is an important view. This we must decide. But we can do so without pursuing any further the difficult details of Strawson's account. I have not yet considered at

23. T.A. Long, op.cit., p.76-77.

length the kind of view attributed to Albritton above. In the next chapter I shall prepare the way for doing so, as I lay the foundations for a consideration of Wittgenstein's own comments on these problems and the question of interpreting him.

We may yet find that some parts of Strawson's account can be rescued, but this will only be possible if we have some perspective in which to also see the point at which his problems arise.

CHAPTER IV

TWO LEVELS OF DOUBT

It is now possible to see what requirements a plausible alternative to scepticism would have to fulfill: it would have to allow, on the one hand, for the facts of life which the sceptic insists on taking seriously - that we are often mistaken concerning the mental states of others - and, at the same time, it would have to show that there must be at least some cases in which we correctly ascribe a given state.

I do not hope to be able to show in any conclusive manner that such an alternative is possible. I have tried to show in the preceding chapters that it has not been provided in the views we have discussed. In the remainder of this thesis I will attempt a constructive effort to suggest some ways out of the difficulties I have been pointing out. I take some hints from what I think Wittgenstein is getting at in his discussion of these problems.

In this chapter I shall pause briefly to sort out some questions which may have got blurred together in the foregoing discussions. Philosophers on both sides of the issue have spoken as if the only real problem lies in drawing the correct conclusion from observed behaviour. Few, if any, have brought up the possibility of having difficulties at an earlier stage, i.e. that of identifying the behaviour in question. Malcolm and Albritton, for instance, seem to have no worries over the problem of how we recognize groans and grimaces, but only over how it is possible, given the groans and grimaces, to tell on the basis of this observation that the person is in pain. Strawson never quite gets around to telling us what it is, the observation of which, constitutes logically adequate criteria for ascribing, say, pain to another person; he only says that "one ascribes

P - predicates to others on the strength of observation of their behaviour,"¹ never specifying the behaviour. It is my contention that one who insists on doubting will find almost as many problems involved in attempting to identify such things as grimaces, groans and cases of jaw-holding as the sceptic has found in identifying another person's pains. If this contention is correct, then there are two senses in which one can doubt whether another person is in pain. In the first sense, one can doubt whether one has correctly identified the behaviour as groaning, grimacing and holding his jaw. This is to ask whether the criteria of pain are in fact present. The second kind of doubt is doubt in spite of the presence of grimacing, groaning and jaw-holding, i.e. the kind of doubt which has been our concern in the preceding discussion. I hope to show that if one can get beyond the first kind of doubt one has already accomplished much; for when one has arrived at the second kind of doubt one has drastically limited the possibilities. While doubts may still be entertained, they are doubts concerning fairly definite alternatives.

A. DOUBTS ABOUT IDENTIFYING PAIN BEHAVIOUR

In addition to the doubts which we have already been considering, those as to whether the presence of certain kinds of behaviour is an adequate basis for judging a person to be in pain, I wish to suggest that one can also entertain doubts about whether one has correctly identified a groan as a groan, a grimace as a grimace, etc. This is to raise the question of how we decide that the criteria for pain are present in the first place.

One immediate reaction to raising this doubt might be that we do not "decide" about such matters at all - we just see that a man is grimacing

1. Strawson, op.cit., p.106

or holding his jaw, or we just hear him groaning. Bertrand Russell, who is fond of reminding us that we often say more than we have a right to say, seems to be making this kind of point when he tells us that although we often say that we "see" that a man is angry, all that we really "see" (and all, therefore, we are entitled to speak of) is his frown.² While Russell has definite qualms about the possibility of ever getting at another person's feelings³ (e.g. anger) he detects no problems, apparently, in the matter of getting at another person's frowns. One runs all kinds of risks when one says, "I know he was angry because I saw him frowning", but no wagers, it would seem, could be lost on the contention, "I knew he was frowning because I saw him frowning." He may not have meant to frown, or he may not have even been aware that he was frowning - one can frown unwittingly, unconsciously, impulsively - but he frowned. Frowns, as some would have it, are written on the public world for all to see. They are interesting subjects for philosophers only insofar as they are capable of revealing or concealing other things which are of a more problematic nature. And much the same would seem to be true of groans, grimaces and cases of jaw-holding.

But is it all that far-fetched to ask whether what one saw was really a grimace, or whether what one heard was really a groan? I think not. It is neither unthinkable nor unusual that a grimace be taken for a smile, nor a simple throat-clearing for a cry of pain.

The one area in ordinary life where questions concerning the correct identification of behaviour most often arise, and where consistent doubts can be maintained for long periods of time, is in the realm of "love-behaviour."

2. Bertrand Russell, Our Knowledge of the External World (New York: New American Library, 1960), p.59

3. Ibid., p.61

When the preliminary stages of a love-affair are being suffered through, questions of properly identifying particular pieces of behaviour can be both serious and timely. Thus, when the would-be lover asks, "Does she love me ?" he may well be halting between two alternative descriptions of her behaviour: "Did she accidentally touch my hand or was she caressing it? Was she puckering up or licking her chapped lips? Was she sighing or catching her breath? Cooing or mumbling?" Well, what is the difference between an accidental touch and a quick caress? Do they have to feel different? (And what about the difference between accidental touch and an "accidental" touch?) Can the difference always be shown? Will a slow-action movie (or a snapshot) of her hand grazing his help when all else fails? Or, can we, perhaps, decide the issue with a pressure-meter?

These qualms can not always be conclusively dismissed by looking at the gesture, or listening to the sound, more closely. The question of whether to identify a brief recording of a few sounds as groaning or humming, or a closeup shot of a facial expression as a smile or a grimace, will finally, in many cases, force an arbitrary choice.

The point of all this is that what distinguishes, say, a grimace from a smile is not the actual physical make-up of the action. But what is the distinguishing element? One is tempted to say that the difference is in the circumstances, the surroundings. A particular facial expression would be, under one set of circumstances (e.g. when accompanied by laughter, when in response to a witty saying), a smile, under another (pacing the floor, seeing an accident), a grimace. But there are some situations in which the most careful observation and analysis of the circumstances does not seem to be enough to decide what the gesture or expression is to be identified as. It may not be enough to observe that she obviously touched his hand accidentally

because she immediately reached beyond him for the sugar; reaching for the sugar might well have been a good excuse for getting in a quick caress.

If smiles and grimaces are not "brute facts" and, furthermore, if they are not always distinguishable by the surroundings or circumstances, then it would seem that what makes a particular expression a smile and not a grimace is the "state of mind" which accompanies it, i.e. the intention "behind" it. While this is true it is not yet helpful. The question of what intentions are is a huge topic in itself. But, however we would want to analyse them, we would have to account for the point that the sceptic would certainly insist upon, that intentions can be kept hidden in much the same manner as can pains. To say that she either accidentally touched him or she caressed him is to (among other things) bring up the question of her intentions. And we may never know what those intentions were, i.e. we may never know what she is really doing - she may lie, die, move away, or change her mind.

Similar doubts can be raised about the criteria of toothaches: I enter the room and see John with his hand on his jaw and I hear him making noises (and sometimes even that might be too "definite" a description):

"What's the matter? Toothache?"

"No."

"Well, then, why are you holding your jaw and groaning?"

"I'm not. I'm just sitting here, resting my chin on my hand and humming war chants."

"Why were you grimacing, then?"

"I wasn't grimacing! I always screw up my face like that when I hum war chants."

And how do we tell the difference between holding one's jaw and resting one's chin on one's hand (or feeling one's beard)? Or between groaning and humming

war chants (or politely clearing his throat)? Well, in some circumstances we like to think that the differences are obvious. But it isn't (necessarily) that the hand works harder in one situation than in another, or that we do something different with our vocal chords in each case.

But sometimes the circumstances will not convince us either way. John's war-chant explanation may satisfy us or it may not; much depends on what kind of person John is - and even then we could have misjudged him. We might suspect that he's trying to conceal his pain; and once again, we may never know the truth.

The problems which revolve around this subject are far-reaching. I have raised a few of them, not in order to solve them so much as to show that many of the same kinds of doubts which have been raised about whether so-and-so is in pain can also be raised about whether so-and-so is in fact groaning, grimacing and holding his jaw. There are also some important differences between doubts about behaviour and doubts about pains. These we must discuss.

B. DOUBTS ABOUT PAIN.

We can move on to a consideration of the question of whether it can never be established on the basis of behaviour that another person is in pain by noting, by the way, a further doubt which may be raised concerning the love-behaviour we discussed. A second sense of the "Does she love me?" question brings out many of the same issues of traditional philosophical scepticism concerning such things as pains. Here the question presupposes the presence of the previously-mentioned love-behaviour.

"This may sound stupid", he told his roommate, "but I still don't know whether Alice really loves me. She certainly acts like it - she's terribly affectionate - but so was Jane and look what she did to me."

(You've just got to have faith in her," Horace answered.)

The point at which the young lover has arrived does still allow for doubt; he can certainly bolster his doubts by considering the many reports of people who took too much for granted in the affairs of love. There are cases of people finding out that they had been consistently deceived over a period of as much as twenty to thirty years; and there is the occasional man who hears, when on his deathbed, the words, "I did it all for your money."

But when doubts are of this order there has been some progress made beyond the earlier doubts. When it is still a moot question as to whether what she is doing is accidentally touching or quickly caressing, there is any number of possibilities which may be conceived about her "mental states": she may be affectionate, clumsy, nervous, provocative, bitter, mysterious, friendly, etc. And if it is still an open question whether she was accidentally touching or quickly caressing one cannot have completely ruled out an indefinite number of other alternative descriptions of her action, that she was e.g. gently slapping (she thought he'd meant something off-colour), nudging, brushing a crumb off, etc. But when it has been established that what she did was caressing, then the possibilities have been drastically limited. Once one has established that her behaviour can be described as caressing, cooing, puckering up, i.e. if one has already identified her behaviour as love-behaviour, then one has narrowed the possibilities to within a particular group of mental states.

Perhaps the distinction can best be made clear in this way. In the earlier kind of doubt, when one asked, "Does she love me?" meaning, "Was she accidentally touching me or caressing, puckering up or licking her lips?" the alternatives could have been any number of things: "Does she love me ?

Does she hate me? Does she just like me? Does she know I'm alive?.....?"

But if she did pucker up and caress, what are the alternatives? Well, she either really loves me, or she thinks she loves me, or is she trying to make me think she loves me, or is she trying to deceive me, or is she trying to make someone else jealous by making it look as if she loves me, or she thinks I am someone else whom she happens to love. Briefly: if she is doing these things, behaving in this way, and it still is the case that she is not in love, then her intentions, mental states, must still be explained in terms of "love."

This parallels a very important kind of doubt about pains. We may, as has already been shown, be wrong about John's alleged pain because we wrongly took him to be groaning, grimacing and holding his jaw when what he was in fact doing was resting his chin on his hand, humming war chants, and doing the appropriate facial contortions. But he might not have been doing the latter either. His behaviour may have had something to do with his interest in Zen or his daily isometric exercises: and if he lied about the war chants, he may not have been concealing pain - he may have been concealing his interest in Buddhism or his concern over his weight.

Assuming, however, that we have correctly identified the behaviour as groaning, grimacing and holding his jaw, while it is not yet certain that he is in pain it is at least certain that what he is doing is related to pain, i.e. that what he is doing will be explained in terms of "pain": if he is really groaning, grimacing and holding his jaw and yet is not in pain, then he must be doing something similar to feigning pain, rehearsing pain, or acting out pain, i.e. the situation is either one of real or simulated pain. A person who maintains that he is groaning, grimacing and holding his jaw because he is happy, or lethargic, is demonstrating his ignorance of the meaning of "groaning", "grimacing", and "holding one's jaw." He

may have made noises; but if they expressed happiness or lethargy they did not constitute "groaning" - sighing, perhaps, or moaning, but not groaning.

C. SOME IMPLICATIONS OF THIS DISTINCTION.

That these suggestions not only make it possible to formulate a more adequate view of the relation between pain and pain-behaviour which has seemed to have puzzled so many philosophers but also provide the basis for a better representation of Wittgenstein's position than has been given by either Malcolm or Albritton will be seen in the next chapter. Suffice it for the present to summarize the points I have been attempting to make.

I have distinguished between two kinds of doubt which may be raised concerning the pains of others. The first kind questions whether one has adequately identified the behaviour in question as, e.g. groans and grimaces. Doubts of this kind involve no clear-cut alternatives. There is a long and indefinite list of possible descriptions of a particular gesture. I think that it could be further argued that in some situations it could be doubted whether what is observed is in fact a "gesture" or a piece of "behaviour" - the recent discussions of what it would take to finally bring us to admit that machines or robots are "intelligent" or "conscious" provide many examples of this kind of problem.⁴ I bring this up in order to note that we must not take too much for granted: the so-called "criteria" of pain - things such as grimaces and groans - are also attributed to other persons on the basis of criteria. And not only are there criteria for calling a particular piece of behaviour a "groan", but

4. cf. essays collected in Minds and Machines, ed. Alan Ross Anderson (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964).

there are also criteria for calling a particular something a "piece of behaviour" - and, as Wittgenstein insists, the label "something" is also applied on the basis of criteria. At each level it is possible to dispute whether the criteria for applying a particular label are present. At each level it is possible to be wrong.

The second kind of doubt which we have noted is doubt in the presence of the appropriate behaviour; granted that he's groaning, grimacing and holding his jaw - but is he in pain ? I have suggested that this kind of doubt is poised between fairly clear alternatives - and in so far as it is, it is distinguished from the first kind of doubt. Doubts which are maintained in the face of groans and grimaces can only be doubts about whether the man is either in pain or simulating pain; to put it crudely: they are not doubts about what the man is doing but doubts about why he is doing it. The question of pretence cannot be raised about the behaviour as such. We can suspect that his groan is a part of his pretence of pain, but we cannot suspect that he is only pretending to groan. As J.L. Austin has so convincingly argued,⁵ there are some kinds of things that one cannot pretend about - whatever pretences about anger and pain our fellows may wish to foist upon us, to growl or scream, whether in earnest or in jest, is to growl and scream. Although we ordinarily speak of "faking" a groan (a growl, a scream), we do not mean that the groan didn't quite "come off", that it was almost-but-not-quite-a-groan. (This is not to say that it is impossible to almost-but-not-quite-groan). A faked groan is a real groan carried out for special purposes, an insincere groan. To say that a groan

5. J.L. Austin, "Pretending", in Philosophical Papers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), pp.201-219.

was "fake", or "phony", is not to describe what the groan sounded like but it is to tell something about the motives behind the groan.

I have tried to show that in our search for the criteria on the basis of which we identify a case of pain we are forced to rely on behaviour which itself is identified on the basis of certain criteria. The criteria for something's being a grimace rather than a smile are the circumstances or surroundings in the context of which the behaviour takes place. It is possible, I have tried to show, to ask whether the circumstances are ever such that it has been established beyond question that the behaviour has been correctly identified. Presumably, doubts can be maintained concerning any given case in much the same manner as the sceptic has maintained doubts about the identification of another person's pain: e.g. one might hypothesize that John is concealing his pain and therefore one may wonder whether he was smiling or grimacing; even if he began to laugh and joke immediately afterwards, one could suspect that he had involuntarily grimaced and then had quickly gone on to act as if it had been a smile.

Another important distinction follows, by implication, from this discussion. Parallel to the distinction made between doubts about identifying behaviour and doubts about identifying pain on the basis of behaviour, we can now see two different senses in which one can wrongly attribute pain to another person. First of all, one can mistakenly think another person is in pain because one incorrectly identifies his behaviour as groaning, grimacing and holding his jaw when it was actually, say, humming, resting his chin, etc. This is to be wrong about pain in the sense of mistakenly thinking that the criteria of pain are present.

The possible alternative accounts here are (in a sense) unlimited; rather than being in pain he may be in ecstasy, despair, meditation, training, love etc. - or nothing !

The second kind of error about pain does not provide us with a multitude of possibilities to worry about. Here one does not mis-identify the behaviour - he is groaning, grimacing and holding his jaw; if this is so one can only be wrong in taking real pain to be simulated pain or simulated pain to be real pain, i.e. "pain" must enter into the alternative descriptions.

But more must be said concerning these distinctions before it can be made clear that what is being argued assists us in any way in overcoming sceptical doubts.

CHAPTER V

CRITERIA, SYMPTOMS AND DECEPTION

In the various viewpoints which we have been considering, we have noticed that the philosophers who have wished to refute the sceptic are agreed that in order to do so they will have to attack him on his contention that the relation between observable behaviour and inner states is a "merely contingent" one. Thus, these philosophers have tried to show that behaviour is not merely a "sign" (Strawson), nor "evidence" (Malcolm), of a mental state, but that the relationship is something stronger than this. The difficulty is, of course, that to suggest the obvious alternative, that the relation is in some sense a "necessary" one, is to put oneself in an embarrassing position: because the relation just isn't a "necessary" one. Therefore, while one wants behaviour to be something stronger than just a "sign" of mental states, one cannot have it too strong - it cannot, for instance, be a "guarantee."

A. CRITERIA AND SYMPTOMS.

Wittgenstein is also concerned to see behaviour as more than a sign; this is why he introduces his distinction between "criteria" and "symptoms" - the latter being equivalent, I take it, to "signs". As Malcolm correctly points out¹, Wittgenstein sees a "symptom" as something learned from "experience", whereas a "criterion" is a matter of "definition". But in taking this to mean that "the satisfaction of the criterion of y establishes

1. Malcolm, "Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations," (ed.) Chappell, op.cit., p.87. cf. Chapter II of this thesis.

the existence of y beyond question",² Malcolm, I suggest, shows that he has not understood the role which Wittgenstein sees the criterion of y playing in our understanding of y. I wish to briefly examine a particular passage in which Wittgenstein is much clearer on the subject than are many of his interpreters.

In the passage I am referring to Wittgenstein is trying to clarify his criterion-symptom distinction; he does so by considering the suggestion that there is not any real difference between the two:

"Experience teaches us that there is rain when the barometer falls, but it also teaches us that there is rain when we have certain sensations of wet and cold, or such-and-such visual impressions." In defence of this one says that these sense-impressions can deceive us. But here one fails to reflect that the fact that the false appearance is precisely one of rain is founded upon a definition.³

We must first of all be clear about the view he is attacking here. It may be suggested that there are many kinds of things that we can "go on" when we want to find out whether it is raining. We can check to see whether the barometer has fallen, or we can look out of the window, or we can go outside to feel whether it is raining.

A fallen barometer is a "sign" of rain, we want to say, because we have observed a certain correlation between events in the past until we have finally come to rely on our experience, so that if one event is present we infer that the other is also present. That human beings are capable of forming such associations between events is what makes it possible for them to invent such things as barometers. But a barometer

2. Ibid.

3. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963), para.354.

can never be anything more than a "sign" of rain; for it is always possible for the barometer to have fallen and, yet, for it not to be raining, or vice versa. The falling of the barometer is not the rain, it is only something which very often accompanies the rain.

What concerns Wittgenstein is that it might also be argued that, in the same sense that the barometer is not the rain, none of the things we go on when we say that it is raining is the rain. If we distrust barometers, and always insist on seeing (or feeling) rain for ourselves, therefore relying only on "sensations of wet and cold, or such-and-such visual impressions" we still might be deceived or mistaken on this basis. No list of statements describing the kinds of things we "experience" when it rains can make it a foregone conclusion that it is raining. One might be hypnotised, dreaming, or tricked by a mad genius. Therefore, it could be argued, nothing that we go on is more than a "sign."

In reply, Wittgenstein argues that, although we can be deceived both by a barometer and by our impressions, the deception in each case is of a different sort. Following his example through, let us suppose that we were deceived into thinking that it was raining because we had seen the barometer fall. This would be a case of deception based on having formed an association between the different events and then having discovered that the two events do not always accompany each other. Any number of things could be responsible for the falling barometer - and the correct explanation may have nothing at all to do with the weather; it could have been a mechanical failure or a "quirk" of nature. Whatever the explanation, the mistake was due to a false inference, jumping to the wrong conclusion.

The situation is different, however, in the case of being

deceived by sensations of wet and cold, visual impressions of droplets, etc. One has not associated together different events in the same sense that one did in the case of the falling barometer. A falling barometer is an event quite distinguishable from rain; whereas, in normal circumstances, to have sensations of wet and cold is to feel rain, to have visual impressions of droplets is to see rain. Rain is, among other things, wet and cold droplets; and it is not falling barometers.

The argument designed to make us see both falling barometers and the wet and cold droplets as symptoms of rain derives its initial attractiveness from the reminder that one can have the visual impressions and the sensations and still not be seeing and feeling rain, just as one can have falling barometers without rain. But Wittgenstein insists that there is a difference between the two cases of deception; when one is deceived by "sense-impressions", etc., he says, the fact "that the false appearance is precisely one of rain is founded upon a definition". I take his point to be this: when one is deceived by a falling barometer, all one can say is that one jumped to the wrong conclusion; one thought it had been raining but the real cause of the falling barometer may have nothing to do with rain. But when one is deceived by "sense-impressions", etc., one can still say, "It appeared to be raining, but it really wasn't." The relation between "rain" and "wet", "cold", and "droplet" is such that, given the latter when it still isn't raining, one can describe the situation in terms of "rain", i.e. "rain" will enter into the alternative description: "They poured water from the roof to trick me into thinking that it was raining", "The hypnotist told me that I was out in the rain," "It sure looks like rain", "I felt a few drops of rain."

One point about criteria and symptoms that can be derived from this example is that a symptom of something may vary from group to group, or even from person to person, without important changes in what that something is; but criteria cannot so differ without bringing about important conceptual differences. A symptom of rain for the Ungabungis may be the twitching of the witchdoctor's feather, while in Arkansas a sure bet may be the reactivation of Grandma's rheumatism; people may be able to detect or predict rain on these bases as well as we do on the basis of falling barometers. But one can know what rain is without being able to recognise a barometer or a witchdoctor; presumably, one could get along without any symptoms of rain. But the person or group for whom "wet and cold" or "droplets" (or their Ungabungi equivalents) are not criteria of rain would possess a different concept of rain - they could not possibly know what rain - as we know it - is.

A rough way of putting this point is to say that symptoms are "accidental" and criteria are in some sense "essential". Symptoms may constantly vary and change but criteria cannot do so without affecting important conceptual changes.

This distinction can be applied to the problem of pain. Symptoms of John's having a toothache may be of many different kinds: whistling the Star-Spangled Banner, mumbling the Magnificat, pacing the floor, doing push-ups. In another culture John might have been taught to sacrifice a pig to the gods when suffering from a toothache. Such symptoms may provide sure ways of telling John's condition. Or they may deceive us; on the basis of these symptoms we might have been misled into thinking that John had a toothache when he was in fact feeling patriotic or religious, or

beginning spring training.

We can also be deceived by the criteria of toothache - but the result is a different kind of deception. If he is holding his jaw, grimacing and groaning, and if he is not really in pain, then it still can be said that he appears to be in pain, i.e. "pain" will enter into the alternative description; to paraphrase Wittgenstein's remark, the fact that the deception is precisely one of pain is founded upon a definition. In the case of symptoms, John is whistling the Anthem either because he is in pain or because he is feeling patriotic, or for no reason at all; but if the criteria of pain are present, John must either have a toothache or he must be trying to create the appearance of having a toothache, i.e. he is rehearsing, feigning, acting out - or just thinking about toothaches. Even if John were to maintain that he is groaning, grimacing and holding his jaw because he is thinking about religion, this would imply that religion is a source of pain for him.

One point cannot be stressed too much. In order for us to insist that "pain" must enter into any description of his behaviour, he must be holding his jaw, groaning and grimacing, and not just standing with his chin resting on his hand, making noises and doing facial contortions. Only if "He is holding his jaw, grimacing and groaning" is a true description of what John is doing, must "pain" enter into the explanation. That is to say, once we have heard his "noise" as a "groan" and have seen his "contortions" as a "grimace", we have already made the case into a "pain" situation.

As Stanley Cavell puts it, for Wittgenstein the criteria are

not criteria of something's "being so" but something's "being so",⁴ i.e. not being pain but being pain. The presence of jaw-holding and groaning justify our identification of the case as a "pain" situation, whether it be real, imagined, or simulated pain. Cavell says, further, that if

it were granted that there are contexts in which claims based in such a way (sc., on criteria as opposed to "symptoms") that in questioning the claim we must (N.B.) raise such considerations as "feigning", "rehearsing", etc., then we have been granted something important, viz., that the concept, and therefore the criteria, of pain will enter into any alternative description of those characteristic behaviors in that kind of circumstances.⁵

B. CRITERIA AND ERROR.

Why is it that to grant that "pain" will enter into any alternative description of the behaviour is, as Cavell insists, to grant "something important?" Well, for what it is worth, we have gained an argument which it is not necessary to qualify as soon as we confront the facts. Malcolm, in trying to make the criteria of pain "establish the existence" of pain is immediately forced to account for the fact that the criteria of pain do not establish the existence of pain; he attempts to argue that the criteria of pain can "settle" the question whether someone is in pain - but the point of the sceptic's argument is that such behaviour does not settle the question. Malcolm tries to get around this by suggesting that the criteria insure existence only in certain circumstances; these circumstances, however, are very difficult to account for - they are indefinite-but-not-infinite in number. Groaning, grimacing and jaw-holding, then,

4. Stanley Cavell, "The Claim to Rationality: Knowledge and the Basis of Morality" (unpublished Ph.D dissertation, Harvard University, 1961) pp.61-62.

5. Ibid.

insure the existence of pain only when they are not accompanied by saying-or-doing-something-to-the-contrary. But, rather than answer the sceptic, this qualification makes it as difficult to ever say "He has a toothache" as the sceptic had made it.

By way of contrast, the view which I have attributed to Wittgenstein makes it possible to limit the role of criteria so that that role is fulfilled even in the case of deception, i.e. what the criteria prove will not be disproved by deathbed confessions or sealed letters. No matter what else is the case, if he is groaning, grimacing and holding his jaw, the case is one of "pain", i.e. the intentions, motives, behind the actions will be explained in terms of "pain".

We are also able to improve upon the suggestion made by Albritton and possibly intended by Strawson, that the presence of the criteria means that we are "justified in saying" that he was in pain, even if he is not in pain. For it is now possible for us to have some general picture of the sorts of ways in which we might be wrong about his pain. On our analysis, we certainly are not justified in saying that he had toothache even though he was in fact singing the baby to sleep; this is a case of misidentification of behaviour. If he was singing the baby to sleep we were wrong in thinking him to be groaning; the only "justification" we might be able to muster up is that he is a poor singer, i.e. that his singing sounds like groaning (but never that his singing is groaning - this would not only be unfair to him, it would be a misuse of language). The embarrassing thing about these situations is that there is seldom any worry about being justified in saying that he was in pain; it is more likely that we will have to justify what we did, e.g. having called the doctor, having slapped a

tourniquet on him.

But even having established that he was groaning, it may still be possible that we were wrong in taking him to be in pain. In this situation - to repeat a much belaboured point - if he was not in pain then he was feigning pain, rehearsing pain, etc. In most cases, there will be little need for us to plead that we were "justified in saying" that he was in pain. Unless one is foolish, or unfortunate, enough to have stumbled upon a movie set, the burden of justification in these cases will be on the groaner; he must explain why he is insincere, or why he rehearsed his lines in the bathroom.

Therefore, there is no being "justified in saying", in Albritton's sense, if he was in fact doing bird calls; but there can be, and is, if necessary, justification for having taken a phoney groan to have been a real groan.

It would seem that if we can get so far as to doubt in the face of the criteria of pain, i.e. if we can establish that the behaviour in question has been correctly identified as groaning, grimacing, etc., then we have in effect gone beyond scepticism concerning other minds (but not, of course, beyond scepticism concerning other mental states). To be left with a choice between deciding that he is either in pain or is pretending to be in pain is, in either case, to attribute intentions to him, i.e. it is to have doubts about what his intentions are and not about whether he has intentions. It would seem, then, that to even wonder about what his groans "mean" is to assume that he has a "mind", that he is a "conscious" being.

If the sceptic is going to stop us it will have to be here. He might wish to argue, at this point, that what I have just suggested is plainly false, that there just are cases of non-"conscious" things groaning. To do so, he would, hopefully, not bring up the subject of "groaning" doors; as someone once pointed out, all creation (in one sense or another) groans - but no philosophical point follows from this. The sceptic may well want to turn to more interesting cases, such as the case of a hypnotist's subject. A hypnotist may reduce his subject to a "puppet", so that the subject follows orders in a purely "mechanical" fashion - his mind is a "blank", and a blank mind, we would all agree, is as good as no mind at all. And yet, it may be pointed out, the subject can be correctly described as "groaning"; and such groaning is done in the absence of any intentions or motives.

This, as an objection, will not do. I would readily admit that this is a case of an "unconscious" person groaning; but I would not consider the case to one of a groan in the absence of motives or intentions. We take the sound coming from the subject to be a groan precisely because we know of the hypnotist's intentions or motives. We could imagine the hypnotist (cruelly) playing a game, using the subject: in the game the hypnotist whispers an order into the subject's ear and we would be required to identify the subsequent behaviour of the subject. Thus, the subject may make noises and we may guess that he is groaning; but the hypnotist announces that the subject was in fact humming war chants, or singing the baby to sleep. In this situation the sounds and gestures of the subject would be described in terms of the intentions and motives of the hypnotist;

and many doubts could be maintained about whether or not we had correctly identified the action. But in this case our doubts would be about whether or not the hypnotist was telling the truth about the action, i.e. whether he had really ordered a groan and then, when we guessed correctly, lied in saying that it was a war chant.

I do not think that this is an insignificant point. It is important to note that sceptics have often expressed their doubts in terms of "being deceived", and that they have, on occasion, introduced grand deceivers (remembering Descartes' demon) into the discussion; and, even when they have not done that, they have spoken of the possibility of other persons being "automata" (remembering Mill's fears), or "robots", which are - and this cannot be overstressed - purposeful beings, although the purposes they carry out are not their own. Automata and robots are puppets with "mental" strings attached; when they arrive on the scene, we are not just being silly if we ask who is "running" them, or who wound them up.

If the sceptic chooses this kind of doubt, i.e. that other people may in fact be automata, then I am not sure that any philosophical argument will silence him. This is what I take Wittgenstein's point to be in his consideration of such doubts:

But can't I imagine that the people around me are automata, lack consciousness, even though they behave in the same way as usual? - If I imagine it now - alone in my room - I see people with fixed looks (as in a trance) going about their business - the idea is perhaps a little uncanny. But just try to keep hold of this idea in the midst of your ordinary intercourse with others, in the street, say! Say to yourself, for example: "The children over there are mere

automata; all their liveliness is mere automatism." And you will either find these words becoming quite meaningless; or you will produce in yourself some kind of uncanny feeling, or something of the sort.

Seeing a living human being as an automaton is analogous to seeing one figure as a limiting case or variant of another; the cross-pieces of a window as a swastika, for example.⁶

To make such a move is to discover "a new way of looking at things"⁷, a "Weltanschauung"⁸; it will reap no "practical advantage" - others will still be pitied, doctored, etc. - "but after all neither does the solipsist want any practical advantage when he advances his view!"⁹ The result is apparently, that everything remains the same, except one has, in addition to everything else, an "uncanny feeling." When such feelings are connected to the fear of devils or gods, I am not sure that any philosophical formula will exorcise them.

But the sceptic may not want it to be left this way. To escape this alternative, he may present a more difficult argument - one which we can do little more than acknowledge here; I raise it, not in order to conclusively answer it, but because I can imagine it being brought up at this point. The sceptic may reply that these arguments have convinced him that he had, in the original formulation of his argument, used some terms too loosely. He may now agree that to hear a particular noise as a "groan" or to see a particular gesture as "holding his jaw" is already to attribute some kind of intentions or motives, i.e. is to attri-

6. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, para.420.

7. Ibid., para. 401.

8. Ibid., para. 122.

9. Ibid., para. 403.

bute "consciousness", to the other person. He may insist that his original contention was basically correct, that even if we could correctly identify a groan as a groan we would not be certain, on that basis, that the groaner is in pain. But now, he may continue, he is not sure that his doubts should not be more radically expressed; it may be the case that we can never know that a particular visual expression is a "grimace", or that a particular sound is a "groan", i.e. it may not be the case that there are any grimaces or groans other than one's own; that is to say, there just may not be any other "expressions of pain", genuine or insincere - and this is to suggest that there are no other minds.

I am not sure how to answer this. I can only offer some very provisional comments. First of all, it should be noted that this variety of doubt is radical indeed. It is, in essence, a denial of the central claim of the argument from analogy, that certain sense impressions can serve as "signs" of the presence of other minds. On this analysis, the only groans one is certain about are one's own groans. In order to defeat this argument one would have to show that it would be impossible to identify one's own groans if what the sceptic says about the groans of others is true. For example, it would have to be shown that one could never establish any connection between the sound that one calls a "groan" and one's own very private sensation of pain; the sound (which, after all, is "heard", like any other) would not be capable of being "tied-up" with one's own pain-sensation unless one already knew that somehow pains can be "expressed" in behaviour. Since the sceptic's case depends on his insistence that the pain and the behaviour are not one and the same thing, but related in a "merely contingent" manner, it would be difficult to explain how the association

ever got started in the first place.

Furthermore, one is tempted to say in answer to this argument that there just are groans and grimaces in cases other than our own. While it is possible to maintain consistent doubts about the correct identification of a particular sound or action, it is certain in many cases that what one hears is a groan, that what one sees is a grimace. But, at present, this only has the status of a tempting conclusion for which supporting arguments must be found. I shall touch briefly on this general problem again when I raise the subject of "private language."

C. PRETENCE.

What has been said up to this point is not enough. For it might be pointed out, and rightfully so, that I have advanced the argument no further than did those whom I criticised in the earlier discussion. The argument to which an alternative is being sought is the one which concludes that we can never be certain in any particular case that another person is in pain; and from the fact that we are occasionally deceived, it would seem to follow that we could always be deceived.

I have insisted throughout my discussion that an adequate alternative to scepticism must allow for the fact that we can be deceived. The philosophers whose views we have been examining have seemed to be arguing that our deception is based on our not having examined the criteria, or the circumstances, closely enough. To this argument I have countered by suggesting that the circumstances may never reveal a successful pretence.

But could we not, then, be always deceived? Does the view of the role of criteria which I have just outlined do anything to show this

possibility to be an unlikely one? As an answer, I must say that I am not convinced that the fact that we identify the behaviour of others, and, consequently, their mental states, on the basis of criteria, as such, does imply that we could not always be deceived. But I do think that it could be argued that we would not have the concept of pain, and therefore, behaviour could not be the criteria of ascribing pain, if there were no instances in which we correctly say on the basis of the criteria of pain, "He is in pain."

The foregoing discussion of criteria has not brought us beyond a stalemate with scepticism. For, if the criteria of pain only limit the possible explanations of the situation such that the case is identified, on the basis of the criteria, as either one of real pain or one of pretended pain, then it still might be suspected that all cases where the criteria of pain are present are, in fact, cases of pretended pain.

It will be remembered that in my discussion of Strawson's position (Chapter III), I suggested that Strawson might have produced a more plausible argument had he tried to show that for each kind of P-predicate there must be some cases of ascribing the predicate in which the behaviour, on the basis of which the predicate is ascribed, constitutes logically adequate criteria for the correct ascription of the predicate. It is this possibility which I must now consider.

I have tried to show that, for Wittgenstein, the criteria of pain do not establish the existence of real pain, but they are criteria for the correct application of the concept of pain to a particular situation, i.e. they are criteria for appropriately introducing "pain" into a description

or explanation of behaviour. I wish to suggest, further, that while Wittgenstein does not see criteria as establishing the existence of real pain, he does hold to the view that we would not have the criteria (i.e. concept) of pain if it were not correctly applied to cases of real pain. This view amounts to the claim that, while it is possible that any particular case in which the criteria of pain are present might be a case of pretended pain, it is not possible that every case in which the criteria of pain are present might be a case of pretended pain. It is not possible here to show with any degree of finality that Wittgenstein is correct in holding this view; I shall merely try to show that he does seem to be taking account of the kinds of things that an adequate alternative to scepticism must take account of.

In the following comment, Wittgenstein is dealing with a matter closely related to the question of whether all cases of pain could be cases of pretended pain.

"What sometimes happens might always happen." What kind of proposition is that? It is like the following: If " $F(a)$ " makes sense " $(\forall x).F(x)$ " makes sense.

"If it is possible for someone to make a false move in some game, then it might be possible for everybody to make nothing but false moves in every game." - Thus we are under a temptation to misunderstand the logic of our expressions here, to give an incorrect account of the use of our words.

Orders are sometimes not obeyed. But what would it be like if no orders were ever obeyed? The concept "order" would have lost its purpose.¹⁰

10. Ibid., para. 345.

What is being objected to is the jump from saying that since it is possible that any particular order could be disobeyed, then it is possible that no order is ever obeyed. But, Wittgenstein objects, our having the concept "order" is dependent on orders being normally obeyed. If everyone disobeyed orders the whole point of giving orders would be different. (For instance, an order to rest might be given to get a man to work.)

Furthermore,

it is only in normal cases that the use of a word is clearly prescribed; we know, are in no doubt, what to say in this or that case. The more abnormal the case, the more doubtful it becomes what we are to say. And if things were quite different from what they actually are - if there were for instance no characteristic expression of pain, of fear, of joy; if rule became exception and exception rule; or if both became phenomena of roughly equal frequency - this would make our normal language games lose their point. - The procedure of putting a lump of cheese on a balance and fixing the price by the turn of the scale would lose its point if it frequently happened for such lumps to suddenly grow or shrink for no obvious reason.¹¹

I take Wittgenstein to be saying here - and elsewhere, as we shall see - that the exception is somehow "parasitic" on the rule, such that it could not even be the case that the exception and the rule were of "roughly equal frequency"; if this were so "our normal language games lose their point."

One can apply this notion to the problem of real and pretended pains. If certain sounds and gestures were not taken as genuine expressions of pain in the first place, there would be no possibility of

11. Ibid., para. 142.

being deceived by them. The pretence is the exception to the rule; it is the abnormal case. This is suggested in the following comments.

Pretending is, of course only a special case of someone's producing (say) expressions of pain when he is not in pain. For if this is possible at all, why should it always be pretending that is taking place - this very special pattern in the weave of our lives?

A child has much to learn before it can pretend. (A dog cannot be a hypocrite, but neither can he be sincere.)¹²

Are we perhaps over-hasty in our assumption that the smile of an unweaned infant is not a pretence? - And on what experience is our assumption based?

(Lying is a language game that needs to be learned like any other one.)¹³

Why can't a dog simulate pain? Is he too honest? Could someone teach a dog to simulate pain? Perhaps it is possible to teach him to howl on particular occasions as if he were in pain, even when he is not. But the surroundings which are necessary for this behaviour to be real simulation are missing.¹⁴

The point of these remarks is that the notion of pretended pain, or simulated pain, is in some sense derivative, that pretended pain is a "special case" of pain (meaning real pain). We take groans and grimaces to be (genuine) expressions of pain and, having done this, we can go on to see particular expressions as insincere, deceptive.

Thus in the case of the dog or the infant there is as yet no reason, no special circumstances, which provides the context for our suspecting that the crying, or howling, isn't real, i.e. genuine, sincere; the "surroundings" for insincerity, and therefore also for sincerity, are

12. Ibid., pages 228-229.

13. Ibid., para. 249.

14. Ibid., para. 250.

not yet present. To think of (imagine) someone as lying or feigning we must be able to attribute to them other motives and intentions; in the example of teaching a dog to howl as if he were in pain, even though he isn't, we do not have a case, says Wittgenstein, of "real simulation". The closest we can come to seeing his howling as deceit or trickery is to see the deception as being on the part of the trainer of the dog. This is because the dog (and the unweaned infant) is not yet capable of doing the kinds of things - such as: scheming, planning to throw us off the trail, etc. - that would be necessary for the behaviour to be real pretence. Crudely: in order for the dog to be, by his howling, simulating pain, we must be able to think of the dog as intending his behaviour to be pain-behaviour. Some dogs may be capable of such intentions (e.g. the dog who looks sad in order to get sympathy or food); but insofar as they are, we think of them as very "human", "intelligent", or at least "playful".

Therefore, when Wittgenstein says "Just try - in a real case - to doubt someone else's fear or pain"¹⁵, I do not think that he is suggesting that it is impossible to do so; he is, I suspect, trying to get us to see that we cannot imagine a wife or son to be pretending unless we also imagine other things to also be the case.

The point which has been made is this: in order for us to see a particular groan or grimace as insincere, i.e. as part of a pretence, it is necessary that groans and grimaces are ordinarily, normally, honest expressions of pain. Having said this, we can now articulate an objection

15. Ibid., para. 303.

to scepticism concerning other minds which, even if all other arguments should be inconclusive, is, I think, a crucial blow to that position. It is this: the sceptic himself could not have formulated his argument if he did not already take some expressions by other persons to be sincere, honest ones. For basic to the sceptical argument is the claim that we may always be deceived; and to back this up the sceptic points to cases where we were deceived. And what does this mean? It means that on occasion we have taken groans and grimaces to be honest expressions of pain, only to have been told, or to have detected, on a later occasion that the person had not really been in pain. And this is to say that we have taken an admission from the person, that he had been faking, to be an honest revelation of his deception; or, we have taken a subsequent laugh, or a sly glance, to have been a "giveaway", i.e. an accurate criterion of his having deceived us. The sceptic, in the final analysis, must take some overt behaviour to be an honest expression of mental states; if he did not, he could not get his argument started. But I do not think that he could reply that it is only necessary for him to initially take some expressions to be honest ones; in order for his argument to work, in order for him to argue that because we are occasionally deceived we might always be deceived, he must be able to show that we are occasionally deceived; and to do this, he must claim that certain expressions are honest expressions.

D. PRIVATE LANGUAGE.

Now we can return to an objection which I raised earlier but did not deal with at length. At this stage the sceptic might argue that he is not taking any expressions of pain, or expressions of anything else,

to be genuine but his own. He cannot, he may argue, even be certain that there are any expressions of mental states other than in his own case. But he can, he may insist, know his own pains and expressions to be real and genuine, because he has observed a correlation between a private sensation which he calls pain and certain physical behaviour.

It is essential to Wittgenstein's position that such an alternative is not plausible. I cannot here offer anything like an exposition of his attacks on the notion of a "private language", a notion basic to this sceptical reply. I will, however, briefly sketch some of the points which he makes.

Wittgenstein argues that if there were no outward, public criteria of pain it would not be possible for a person to identify his own sensation as a "pain" in the first place.

"What would it be like if human beings shewed no outward sign of pain (did not groan, grimace, etc.)? Then it would be impossible to teach a child the use of the word 'tooth-ache'." Well, let's assume the child is a genius and itself invents a name for the sensation! - But then, of course, he couldn't make himself understood when he used the word. - So does he understand the name, without being able to explain its meaning to anyone? - But what does it mean to say that he has 'named his pain'? - How has he done this naming of pain?' And whatever he did, what was its purpose? - When one says "He gave a name to his sensation" one forgets that a great deal of stage-setting in the language is presupposed if the mere act of naming is to make sense. And when we speak of someone's having given a name to pain, what is presupposed is the existence of the grammar of the word "pain"; it shews the post where the new word is stationed.¹⁶

16. Ibid., para. 257.

What the "stage-setting", which is "presupposed" in the naming, is becomes clearer in his example of the diary.¹⁷ Suppose I keep a diary and record the recurrence of a certain private sensation. I decide to label the sensation "S", and every time it occurs I mark an "S" on the calendar for every day on which the sensation is experienced. I distinguish this sensation from others by a kind of inner "pointing"; I concentrate on the particular sensation:

for in this way I impress on myself the connexion between the sign and the sensation. - But "I impress it on myself" can only mean: this process brings it about that I remember the connexion right in the future. But in the present case I have no criterion of correctness. One would like to say: whatever is going to seem right to me is right. And that only means that here we can't talk about 'right'.¹⁸

Wittgenstein's point is that in order to name the sensation there must already be some criteria present for choosing this particular sensation from among others. And having these criteria, being able to single out this sensation, presupposes "the grammar of the word 'pain'" - this is the "stage-setting". While the subject of Wittgenstein's use of "grammar" is immense, we can get some idea of his view from a passage in The Blue Book:

It is part of the grammar of the word "chair" that this is what we call "to sit on a chair", and it is part of the grammar of the word "meaning" that this is what we call "explanation of a meaning"; in the same way to explain my criterion for another person's having toothache is to give a grammatical explanation about the word

17. Ibid., para. 258.

18. Ibid.

"toothache" and, in this sense, an explanation concerning the meaning of the word "toothache".¹⁹

Thus we could teach the grammar of the word "toothache" by saying that this is what we call "nursing a toothache", "complaining of a toothache". A person who does not know what it means to "sit", or to "rest", does not know what a "chair" is: if a person pointed to a chair and said, "That is a chair", and proceeded to consistently place his food and drink on the chair while he stood or kneeled alongside, eating, we would then be forced to wonder whether he really knows what a chair is - he calls it a "chair" but he treats it as a table.

Similarly, it is not enough to say that a person can single out a particular sensation and label it "pain"; this presupposes that that person already can do certain things, can act in certain ways. Wittgenstein comments further in a very difficult passage:

how does a human being learn the meaning of the names of sensations?- of the word "pain" for example. Here is one possibility: words are connected with the primitive, the natural, expressions of the sensation and used in their place. A child has hurt himself and he cries: and then adults talk to him and teach him exclamations and, later, sentences. They teach the child new pain-behaviour. "So you are saying that the word 'pain' really means crying?" - On the contrary: the verbal expression of pain replaces crying and does not describe it.²⁰

I do not think that Malcolm correctly interprets this passage; he writes:

I take Wittgenstein to mean that the child's utterances of the word for a sensation must, in the beginning, be frequently con-

19. The Blue and Brown Books (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1960), p.24.

20. Philosophical Investigations, para. 244.

current with some nonverbal, natural expression of that sensation. This concomitance serves as the criterion of his understanding the word. Later on, the word can be uttered in the absence of primitive expressions.²¹

Malcolm seems to see the picture this way: there are certain "natural" expressions of pain, such that pains somehow "flow out" through these expressions without conscious deliberation on the part of the expressor. By concentration the child notices a certain association between natural expression and spoken adult-words. Gradually the child learns to substitute the words for the primitive expressions. Thus "I have a pain" can replace crying.

The difficulty with this view (and if Malcolm doesn't intend this view it is still worth noting) is that rather than making the sensation the "given", as does the sceptic, it makes the expression of the sensation in some sense the "given". If the sceptic's error is in thinking that, with no criteria of "correctness", he is able to tie labels to sensations, then the error of this view is that it assumes that one can, with no criteria of correctness, tie a word to an expression of a sensation.

One comes closer to Wittgenstein's view by considering his remark that "what has to be accepted, the given, is - so one could say - forms of life."²² And the forms of life are the kinds of things we (human beings) do, the practices which, taken as a series, constitute human nature - things such as pleading, comforting, complaining, sympathizing, punishing,

21. Norman Malcolm, "Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations," in (ed.) Chappell, op.cit., p.83.

22. Philosophical Investigations, page 226.

etc. Without this "stage-setting" there is as yet no point to singling out a sensation and labelling it. The child, if it is capable of learning to speak of, and finally to even lie about, its pains, will do so because it is a human being who does the kinds of things human beings do, in a very basic sense. Without this, no amount of observing sensations will be sufficient for him to learn what pain is. Wittgenstein is saying that in order to concentrate, label, learn, at all we must bring something to the situation, something which is not picked up from experiences, but something which makes experiences of a particular type possible:

We feel as if we had to penetrate phenomena: our investigation, however, is directed not towards phenomena, but, as one might say, towards the 'possibilities' of phenomena.²³

In the end we must finally say that we have the criteria according to which we speak of pains, both of ourselves and others, because we have developed as human beings along the lines we have developed: "if I have exhausted the justifications I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: 'This is simply what I do.'"²⁴

This is a subject to which my own brief remarks cannot possibly have begun to do justice. I have merely tried to show that Wittgenstein seems to be proposing views which meet the demands of any position which is to be considered as an adequate alternative to scepticism. The only task which remains is that of summarizing my discussion.

23. Ibid., para. 90.

24. Ibid., para. 217.

CONCLUDING REMARK

In the foregoing discussion I have attempted to criticize some recent attempts to refute scepticism concerning other minds. Unfortunately, the overall point of my thesis has been a negative one. I have tried to show how some of the arguments that have been directed at scepticism have not done justice to the claims which the sceptic offers in support of his conclusion. Where scepticism begins is at the point where we all are, on occasion, mistaken about the mental states of others. If, finally, we are going to refute him, we must show, not that this claim is erroneous - this is to deny the facts - but we must show that the sceptic has no right to begin at this point; we must show that deception itself can be understood only if we begin somewhere else.

I am optimistic about the possibility of showing that the sceptic, in claiming that we take too much for granted in our ordinary lives, takes too much for granted himself. However, I am not confident about my ability at present to put the sceptic in his place. For this reason I have attempted, with great caution, to outline in a very general fashion, the main points of what I think to be an adequate response to scepticism. I am not clear as to how much, or even what, must be said to defend each of these points. It seems to me that they can best be worked out by paying close attention to many of Wittgenstein's remarks on this and related subjects.

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